THE INTERPRETATION OF CHRISTIAN MYSTICISM
IN
THE LIFE AND WRITINGS
OF
BARON FRIEDRICH VON HUGEL

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
TH. D.
in the Union Theological Seminary

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ABBREVIATIONS USED
FOR
MAJOR WORKS OF VON HUGEL

MER I, MER II	--	THE MYSTICAL ELEMENT OF RELIGION AS STUDIED IN SAINT CATHERINE OF GENOA AND HER FRIENDS. VOL. I AND VOL. II.
EL	--	ETERNAL LIFE, a study of its implications and applications
GS	--	THE GERMAN SOUL: TWO STUDIES
E&A I, E&A II	--	ESSAYS AND ADDRESSES ON THE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION, First Series and Second Series.
SL	--	SELECTED LETTERS
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RG -- THE REALITY OF GOD AND RELIGION AND AGNOSTICISM

INTRODUCTION

The current plight of the word "mysticism" makes some clarification imperative before entering into any serious discussion of the subject. Few words in the English language have been more abused. It is applied to the performances of mediums and the ecstasies of saints, dreamy poetry and medieval art, prayer and palmistry and even, according to William James, to the higher branches of intoxication.[1]

Etymologically the word has a close connection with the term "the mysteries" as applied to certain pagan initiations of the world of St. Paul's day. A mystic (μύστης) was one who had been initiated into divine things. He was obliged to keep his mouth shut (μύειν) about them, because the initiation was secret. Later, the idea came to be that his eyes were shut; either, as the adjective μυστικός implied, because the knowledge could only be imparted through limited symbols, or, as in the case of the Neo-Platonists, because the eyes were closed to the external world during contemplation.[2]

Rufus Jones has suggested that part of the confusion of the English term arises from its use as an equivalent for two characteristically different German words: "Mystizismus," which stands for the cult of the supernatural, for theosophical pursuits, for a spiritualistic exploitation of psychical research; and "Mystik," which stands for immediate

1. James, William, VARIETIES OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE, p. 377
2. Inge, W. R., CHRISTIAN MYSTICISM, p. 4

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experience of a divine-human intercourse and relationship. Our word "mysticism" has also been commonly used to describe both the first-hand experience of direct intercourse with God and the theological-metaphysical doctrine of the soul's union with Absolute Reality, i.e. with God. Rufus Jones concludes that "it would be conducive to clarity to restrict the word 'mysticism' to the latter significance, namely, as an equivalent for the German word 'Mystik,' and as designating the historic doctrine of the relationship and potential union of the human soul with Ultimate Reality, and to use the term 'mystical experience' for the direct intercourse with God."[3]

The broader term "mysticism," then, covers the experience of the soul's union with God, however conceived, and its subsequent psychological, philosophical and theological elaboration. It is, thus, an approach to Ultimate Reality. Josiah Royce has described it as one of the four alternative conceptions and approachs to Reality which the history of philosophy and religion has produced.[4] He sees the mystics as "the only thorough-going empiricists in the history of philosophy."[5] To them have been "historically committed the feeding of the flock of the faithful, the gathering of the heavenly manna, the saving of humanity from the abyss into which mere respectability of dogmatic realism, if left to itself, would have infallibly plunged all the deeper interests of the spirit."[6] Nevertheless this, for him, can never be a satisfying or final approach

3. Jones, Rufus, in HASTINGS ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF RELIGION AND ETHICS, Vol. IX, p. 83
4. Royce, Josian, THE WORLD AND THE INDIVIDUAL
5. Ibid, p. 81
6. Ibid, p. 191

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to Reality.

In contrast to Royce there is no lack of philosophers who would consider mysticism, in its broadest terms, as the most valid and all-embracing approach to Reality. William Ernest Hocking is an example of this. In his analysis of the "Types of Philosophy" Mysticism is, significantly, the last described.[7] He summarized Mysticism as an approach to Reality under the following points:[8]

1. Reality is One.
2. Reality is ineffable -- all the predicates or descriptions which we apply to it are somehow in need of correction, including what follows.
3. Reality is identical with the equally indescribable essence of the human Self: the extremes coincide.
4. It is possible (and vitally important) to reach an intuitive knowledge of, or union with, this absolute One.
5. The way to achieve this is by an effort which is primarily moral rather than theoretical.

Mysticism, then, with some incidental and some important variations, represents an approach to Reality which is a universal phenomenon. For Aldous Huxley this is the "Highest Common Factor" in the diverse religions and theologies of mankind. It is nothing less than "The Perennial Philosophy."

> Philosophia Perennis -- the phrase was coined by Leibniz; but the thing -- the metaphysic that recognizes a divine Reality substantial to the world of things and lives and minds; the psychology that finds in the soul something similar to, or even identical with, divine Reality; the ethic

7. Hocking, W. E. TYPES OF PHILOSOPHY, pp. 437-479. For a more extended treatment see his THE MEANING OF GOD IN HUMAN EXPERIENCE, pp. 341-441.
8. Hocking, W. E., TYPES OF PHILOSOPHY, pp. 442, 443

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> that places man's final end in the Knowledge of the immanent and transcendent Ground of all being -- the thing is immemorial and universal. Rudiments of the Perennial Philosophy may be found among the traditionary lore of primitive peoples in every region of the world, and in its fully developed forms it has a place in every one of the higher religions.[9]

Amidst the most varied backgrounds and cultures it can be seen, especially in Hinduism, Taoism, Mahayana and Zen Buddhism, Neo-Platonism, Sufism, Kabbalism, Hasidism and the various mystical movements in the history of Christianity.

In restricting oneself to the mysticism which has been developed within the Christian tradition, certain periods stand out as especially conducive to the cultivation and exploitation of this "element" in the religious life. While no century is without its exponents of Christian Mysticism the three great waves of mystical activity seem to reach their high points in the third, fourteenth and seventeenth centuries. This corresponds with the close of the Classical, the Medieval and the Renaissance periods in history. The evaluation of these periods, however, is a more delicate procedure than their designation. Evelyn Underhill is convinced that "the fourteenth century is as much the classic moment for the spiritual history of our race as the thirteenth is for the history of Gothic, or the fifteenth for that of Italian art."[10] She believes: "We shall find that the great periods of mystical activity tend to correspond with the great periods of artistic, material and intellectual civilization. As a rule, they come immediately after, and

9. Huxley, A., THE PERENNIAL PHILOSOPHY, p. vii
10. Underhill, E., MYSTICISM, p. 454

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seem to complete such periods: those outbursts of vitality in which man makes fresh conquests over his universe apparently producing, as their last stage, a type of heroic character which extends these victories to the spiritual sphere. When science, politics, literature and the arts -- the domination of nature and the ordering of life -- have risen to their height and produced their greatest works, the mystic comes to the front; snatches the torch, and carries it on. It is almost as if he were humanity's finest flower; the product at which each great creative period of the race had aimed."[11] On the other hand, Ernst Troeltsch views the mystical epochs in a more sober light. Mysticism, in the widest sense, is nothing but the insistence upon immediacy, interiority, the presence of religious experience. It presupposes the objectification of religious life in rites, myths or dogmas, and is either a reaction against such objectifications which it attempts to put back into the living process, or a supplementation of the traditional cults by a personal and vital excitation. Mysticism is thus always secondary and intentionally reflective. It is open to the incursions both of spiritualistic Pantheism and of a radical Dualism of flesh and spirit, of time and eternity; thus, to the suggestions of an asceticism which would destroy all things finite or of a libertinism which would treat all with indifference.[12] Thus, certain periods seem especially responsive to both the blessing and curse of mysticism. Ours gives evidence of being such a period.

11. Ibid, p. 453
12. Troeltsch, E., THE SOCIAL TEACHING OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCHES, see especially pp. 993-1013

The fact that Huxley derives more quotations for his Perennial Philosophy from Meister Eckhart and William Law than from any other mystics raises the curious and complicated question of the relationship of Christianity and mysticism. Are they mutually exclusive? Are they essentially the same? Is there such a phenomenon as Christian Mysticism? Or, as Paul Tillich phrases the question in connection with Pseudo-Dionysius, the Areopagite's use of Plotinus: "Can mysticism be baptized?"[13] These questions raise problems with far-reaching consequences and deserve more than a summary answer. It may be stated, however, as the presupposition of this thesis that when carefully defined or characterized the designation "Christian Mysticism" is not a misnomer. As a corollary it follows that the mystical element in Christianity stands in a similar relationship of crisis and fulfillment to non-Christian mysticism as does the larger whole of Christianity to the non-Christian religions.

It is the purpose of this thesis to examine the interpretation of Christian Mysticism as expressed in the life and writings of the Roman Catholic layman, Baron Friedrich von Hugel. It is believed that in his monumental and authoritative studies in this field he provides the most substantial recent help in formulating the questions and indicating the direction in which "solutions" will be found to the problems inherent in Christian Mysticism.

13. Class Lectures

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In his work in the general area of the Philosophy of Religion, von Hugel brought to these questions one of the most devotional, competent, and discriminating minds of our time. Rudolf Metz has characterized him as a "genuinely 'ecumenical' man, who despite his strong bonds with the Catholic Church moves into a region in which denominations are transcended and all Christians are at one. His strong and firm faith is not only a precious possession of his heart, but also a cognition of his mind that is constantly being renewed. His Church allegiance is not merely the acceptance of an inherited traditional value, but the free movement of a spirit controlled by strict regard for the canons of science and objective investigation. His understanding of the divine grows out of a comprehensive mundane culture; his piety is neither dogmatic nor ascetic, but open to sensuous enjoyment and related to everything true, good and beautiful in the earthly life also. He has been called the holy scholar, and the phrase does in fact excellently express the most important components of his nature."[14]

The writings of von Hugel have been thoroughly explored in elucidating his epistemology, doctrine of the Church, concept of the Supernatural, and understanding of man. To the knowledge of this writer no adequate attempt has been made to determine his interpretation of Christian Mysticism, based upon his complete works. The closest attempt was a doctoral dissertation by C. Zielinski entitled, "Der Begriff der Mystik in Baron Friedrich von Hugel's Werk 'The Mystical

14. A HUNDRED YEARS OF BRITISH PHILOSOPHY, pp. 798,799

Element of Religion'" and submitted to the University of Jena in 1913. But this treatment suffers both from its being not readily accessible and its limitation to the Baron's first published major work. This thesis will seek to examine the constituent elements of his interpretation based upon both the earlier and later phases of his life and the whole of his writings. Not only will his theoretical formulation of psychological, epistemological and ontological questions be examined but these will be seen in the light of his personal life as a unique embodiment and integration of the mystical element in the total religious life. Special emphasis will also be given to his ministry of spiritual direction and his interpretation of the devotional life.

The following course will be pursued: Chapter One will consist of biographical material indicating the unique preparation he had for his task. It will also describe some of the avenues through which his influence was felt. Chapter Two will be devoted to his analysis of the mystical "element" in its intimate relation to the historical-institutional and critical-philosophical "elements." Chapter Three will set forth von Hugel's somewhat primitive epistemology in relation to his developing critical realist philosophy. Chapter Four will analyze his descriptions of the God of mystical apprehension. Chapter Five will show the outworkings of this in the life of Christian devotion. This will be largely based on the Baron's experiences and writings as "Director of Souls" and "Lay Bishop." Chapter Six will consist of a concluding summary of the values and limitations of this interpretation of Christian Mysticism.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE LIFE AND WORK OF BARON FRIEDRICH VON HUGEL

I. Parents -- Education -- Early Interests

II. Formative Influences

III. Modernist Controversy

IV. Writings -- Addresses -- Letters

V. Friend and Counselor

VI. Factors Especially Qualifying von Hugel As An Interpreter of Christian Mysticism

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CHAPTER ONE

THE LIFE AND WORK OF BARON FRIEDRICH VON HUGEL

- - - -

If, while walking through the streets of Kensington, England, during the early years of the twentieth century, you were to encounter a heavily bearded man in top hat, massive cloak and black woolen gloves, edging his escort to the pavement as he leaned over him shouting, as only a deaf man can, the most intimate spiritual advice -- that would be Baron Friedrich von Hugel. He could be as frequently encountered sitting in the gardens with a foreign friend, shouting in French, German or Italian on subjects relating to Biblical Criticism, Christian Mysticism, or the claims of the Roman Catholic Church -- to the consternation of all passers-by, of whom he would take no notice whatever. This is the man whose life and work will be described in this chapter and whose interpretation of Christian Mysticism is the subject of this thesis.

Especially in the case of von Hugel, the biographical chapter is not an unnecessary appendix to an otherwise abstract inquiry. It must be constantly remembered that, "in the words used by Abbot Butler in an article in The Tablet after von Hugel's death: 'Beyond all compare greater than the intellectual appeal was the moral appeal of von Hugel's personal religion.' He is so great as a thinker that this side of him is apt to be forgotten, but he cannot be understood unless it is realized that he was more than a mere

CHAPTER ONE

THE LIFE AND WORK
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thinker, and that he lived and died in the fellowship of the Roman Catholic Church."[1] A close examination of his life and work is necessary, therefore, to any understanding of his Mysticism. His final elaboration of the mystical "element" in religion must be seen in the context of a life which, in a unique manner, explored and held in "fruitful tension" the speculative and the experiential; the institutional and the critical. Through a preliminary examination of his life it will be possible to observe those factors which shaped his thinking; those qualities which enabled him to become a foremost interpreter of Christian Mysticism; and those human experiences which reveal his life as the embodiment of that which he so laboriously sought to set forth in his books, lectures and letters.

The arrangement of the biographical material will be largely topical, rather than chronological. The selection is based upon those details which equipped and revealed him as an interpreter of Christian Mysticism.[2]

1. Lester-Garland, L. V., THE RELIGIOUS PHILOSOPHY OF BARON F. VON HUGEL, p. 14

2. Among the most useful introductions to the life of von Hugel the following may be mentioned: Bernard Holland's 68 page introduction to the SELECTED LETTERS; Maurice Nedoncelle's opening chapter in his BARON FRIEDRICH VON HUGEL -- A STUDY OF HIS LIFE AND THOUGHT; and the recent and most complete biography by Michael de la Bedoyere, THE LIFE OF BARON VON HUGEL. The latter makes use of information and correspondence not previously available. Its constant stress is on the orthodoxy of the Baron's Roman Catholic Churchmanship. Autobiographical materials are abundantly scattered through his ESSAYS, ADDRESSES AND LETTERS. The collection of his LETTERS TO A NIECE is expecially valuable in this connection.

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I. Parents -- Education -- Early Interests

Friedrich von Hugel was born on May 5th, 1852 in Florence, Italy. He was the eldest of three children to be born to Baron Karl von Hugel, then an Austrian ambassador to the Court of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany. The family, of Rhenish descent, had received its title from the Holy Roman Empire and had been identified with Austrian interests since 1790.

The father, Karl von Hugel, was an ex-soldier of the Napoleonic Wars. He had traveled extensively throughout the world, especially in India and Australia, and was recognized as a man of extraordinary learning and scrupulous integrity. His special interest was horticulture, and the gardens of Schonbrunn are still enriched with plants he accumulated during his travels. A statue was erected for him in Hietzing in 1901. He appears to have been a "conventional Catholic" whose scientific interests, rather than religious, were bequeathed to his sons.

In 1851 Karl married Elizabeth Farquharson, the daughter of a Scottish general and the niece of Sir James Outram. At the time of their marriage, Karl was fifty-six and his wife only twenty. Friedrich's mother is described as a vivacious and intelligent woman, "at once the terror and delight of all who were brought into intellectual contact with her."[3] She had been brought up a Presbyterian and became a Roman Catholic about the time of her marriage. Their second child, Pauline, died unmarried in 1901. Their third child,

3. THE UNIVERSE, January 30, 1925

I. Parents -- Education -- Early Interests

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Anatole, became a naturalist of merit, like his father, and was for many years head of the Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology at Cambridge. In 1860 the family moved to Brussels and in 1867 the father retired from public life, moving to Torquay, England.

Such a blend of national stocks and international homes could only produce a cosmopolitan outlook in the young Friederich. Throughout his life the subject of national and cultural psychology was of great interest to him. Personally, he felt that his mother's Scottish traits, religious interests and temperamental intensity far outweighed his German inheritance. But he rejoiced in the privilege of his cultural and racial indebtedness.

> For myself, I am deeply grateful to God that I most truly owe, and that I am keenly aware that I owe, to all the great typical races and nations far too much ever to condemn any one of them root and branch. What, above all, would my Religion be without its Jewish figure? What would my Theology be without the Greeks? What would my Church Order be without the Italians? How much poorer would be my devotional life without the German IMITATION! without the French Fenelon! without the Spanish St. Teresa! without the English Mother Julian! I want them all, and I rejoice in them all.[4]

Friedrich's rather rootless early life made possible and inevitable his unusual schooling. He never attended a regular educational institution and enjoyed no university training. Nevertheless his parents provided him with a wide variety of capable tutors during his early years. At

4. E&A II, p. 271. On the subject of the religious importance of Nationality see his essay, "The Difficulty and Dangers of Nationality" in E&A II; also his book THE GERMAN SOUL.

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Brussels his tutor was a Lutheran pastor, while general supervision over his education was exercised by the German Catholic historian, Alfred von Reumont, then stationed at Brussels as Minister for Prussia. During this time he eagerly read the classics and began to study natural science, particularly entomology and ornithology. Once in England he began the study of geology under the direction of a devout Quaker and self-taught geologist, William Pengelly. This subject was to engage him throughout his life. On May 6, 1909 he wrote to Father Tyrrell saying, "I was fifty-seven yesterday and am giving myself a set of newer geological books, a geological hammer and a set of geological type specimens. So expect to tramp about with me to gravel-pits and quarries, please."[5] This type of study was, for him, a valuable balancing corrective to purely metaphysical and religious study. Later, he would work out more carefully the relationship of science to the religious life. He came increasingly to the position that science was not only possible but necessary to the fullest experience of the religious life. He also studied Hebrew under the direction of the famous teacher, Gustav Bicknell.

There are many who believe that his lack of formal training was a distinct asset in his later philosophical work. Certainly, few men who have written so creatively in the field of Philosophy of Religion have brought to their subject matter a more balanced mind, free from the cramping prejudice or artificialities of approach inculcated by a "school bias." But however the method of his

5. Petre, M. D., AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND LIFE OF GEORGE TYRRELL, Vol. II, p. 97

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education might be evaluated, there can be no question as to the intellectual eminence of the product. He has been rightly described as "the missionary of Christianity to the intellects of men."[6] Angelo Crespi, the Italian philosopher, regarded him as "the greatest thinker after Newman." Charles Gore, Bishop of Oxford, called him "the most learned man living."[7] Of his greatest work, THE MYSTICAL ELEMENT OF RELIGION, William Temple wrote, "It is quite arguable that this is the most important theological work written in the English language during the last half-century."[8] Concerning his ETERNAL LIFE, Dr. James Hastings, editor of the ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF RELIGION AND ETHICS said, "I believe that it is the most thorough investigation of the subject that has ever been made."[9]

Although lacking an earned university degree, he was to be the recipient of two honorary degrees. In a letter to Maude Petre, dated June 17, 1914, he wrote:

> I only want to tell you of a pleasant little event in my life--the conferring upon me by St. Andrews--the oldest of the four Scottish Universities-- of the Honorary LL.D. I am to go there to receive it on July 9th--stopping at Edinburgh on the way, for two nights, there to address a private meeting in dear old Dr. Alexander Whyte's Library. This is the first Academic Degree of Honour I have ever received; yet, tho' it comes at 62, it comes not six years after my first book, and hitherto my only full performance--hence it has come quickly and handsomely."[10]

In 1920 Oxford University conferred on him the honorary D. D.; the first Catholic to be so honored since the Reformation. In 1924 Edinburgh offered him its D. D. It was neces-

6. Nedoncelle, M., op. cit., p. 9
7. Quoted in Bedoyere, op. cit., p. xi
8. Ibid. p. xi
9. Ibid. p. xi
10. SL, pp. 210, 211

sary for him to decline this, however, since his health did not permit him to make the trip.

The recognition of scholarship which gave the Baron the most satisfaction was the invitation to deliver the Gifford Lectures for 1924-1926. This was never carried through due to his illness and death in 1925. "This invitation academically crowned a life which had started in so unacademic a way, for he rightly regarded the task as 'the finest lectureship on these great subjects in the world.' Just as his ever increasing work of spiritual guidance to so many, unofficially approved as it seemed to be by his close friendship with so many Catholics of high standing, was to him like a coming into port after many a storm, so an invitation like this, coming as it did after the honorary LL.D. and D. D., set the seal of learned approval on his scholarly authority."[11] It is interesting to observe that the invitation reached him on the day when the Diary notes that he had prepared a lesson on the story of Joseph and his dreams for Gilbert Garceau, a small boy who was coming to him regularly for religious instruction.

Beyond the values of scholarship and learning von Hugel contributed immeasurably more to his generation as a unique personal explorer and guide into the deepest things of the spirit. As an explorer he was forever taking the position of an eager student, "docile" and "teachable." The presence of this attitude is a basic necessity in the person who would develop an interpretation of the mystical "element." "In the typical mystic temperament we expect

11. Bedoyere, op. cit., p. 343

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[1] Sedgwick, op. cit., p. 343

to find a certain openness of spirit, such as readily accepts a present inspiration as its law. The encasements of mental attitude in such persons are never fast-set; the limberness of their inner substance promises well for continuance of growth. At his worst, the mystic is impulsive and childish; at his best he retains something of childhood, its tenderness, its freshness of impression, its unsatiated wonder, its generosity: he has that simplicity and teachableness which are found in the very young and the very great."[12] This "unsatiated wonder" and "teachableness" are characteristic of von Hugel's entire life, and to an amazing degree.

II. Formative Influences

From the standpoints of desire to serve and desire to learn, von Hugel considered himself as "debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise and to the unwise."[13] Because of his encyclopedic learning, his numerous friendships and his constant desire to learn from anyone, he was continually acknowledging his debt to the largest and most diversified list of friends, books, national cultures and historical periods. It would be an impossibility to indicate at all adequately the many influences which contributed to his life. Yet, where one cannot be exhaustive, it is possible to be suggestive. Some of the strongest and most typical of formative influences will be noted.

From his earliest years in his beloved Florence,

12. Hocking, W. E. THE MEANING OF GOD IN HUMAN EXPERIENCE, pp. 400, 401
13. Romans 1:14

Friedrich von Hugel demonstrated his spiritual precocity; his alertness to numerous evidences of "The Reality of God." Years later, in his posthumous work by that title, he described his religious consciousness from the ages of three to seven. After describing the impression made by cathedrals, stars, plants and animals, he concludes:

> I find it, indeed, difficult to recall any specifically moral sense. The religious sense, of a certain kind, was already strongly awake. I already felt all here told, and very much more, that was delightfully different and yet promised at bottom similar delight, bringing repose and expansive power for my young mind, to be penetrated and saturated by a Spirit distinct from what I saw, distinct from myself, the seer, a Reality in no sense my own projection, or the continuation of what I saw, or a name for the totality of what I perceived . . . . All this was very certainly its awakening to delightful activity through this its response to the Mind behind and within all.[14]

This, certainly, could not be so articulated at an early age. But, as the keen delight in plants and stars is not dependent on formal instruction in botany and astronomy, "experience comes first, and theory much later on, even if it ever comes at all in any very great degree."[15]

At the age of eighteen, soon after the death of his father, von Hugel suffered a severe attack of typhoid fever which left him very deaf and in a precarious state of health throughout his life. "The world, which till then had looked so brilliant to me, turned out so distant, cold and shallow." It was just at this time, in Mainz Cathedral, that an incident occurred which affected him profoundly. "Standing in the dark recesses of the building, he saw a young woman rush in. From the disorder of her dress he

14. RG. p. 79
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14. RO. p. 79
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gathered that she was a mother who had been nursing her baby and from the agony of her expression and the violence of her sobs, he realized the baby had just died. He shrank behind a pillar. She ran up the church and threw herself before the High Altar. Her sobs gradually quietened and silence followed. As she came back down the church, he saw her face, and it was radiant. From that moment all his doubts about the efficacy of prayer were ended."[16]

Describing himself as of a "naturally vehement nature" and full of "gravely bad habits and inclinations"[17] von Hugel was desperately in need of the spiritual counsel of some virile Christian. "When I was young and tempted to fall into sin, no old woman with a tract could have saved me. But I came across a Dominican monk. What a splendid man he was! What I learnt from him! He saved me from sin."[18] This first "conversion" came through the instrumentality of Father Raymond Hocking, a Dutch Dominican friar in Vienna.

His second "conversion" came at the age of thirty-two while making his 1884 visit to Paris. Of all the influences upon his life none affected him at the deeper levels of his being as much as a "physically suffering, spiritually aboundingly healthful, mystical saint, a French Secular priest"[19]--Abbe Huvelin. Von Hugel described him as "a man of vehement, seething passions, and of rare forces of mind, whose will of iron, by long heroic submission to grace, had attained to a splendid tonic tenderness. I owe more to this Frenchman than to any man I have ever known in the flesh."[20] Until

16. Bedoyere, op. cit., p. 18
17. SL, p. 352
18. LN, p. xxiv
19. MS letter to Miss Fogelklou, Jan. 11, 1911
20. E&A I, p. 286

16. Bedoyere, op. cit., p. 18
17. Ibid., p. 352
18. Ibid., p. xxiv
19. MS letter to Miss Hoskyns, Jan. 11, 1911
20. MSA I, p. 280

his death, Huvelin was to be the intimate spiritual counselor of the Baron and the model for von Hugel's own work as a "director of souls."

> A gentleman by birth and breeding, a distinguished Hellenist, a man of exquisitely piercing, humorous mind, he could readily have become a great editor or interpreter of Greek philosophical or patristic texts, or a remarkable Church historian. But this deep and heroic personality deliberately preferred 'to write in souls,' whilst occupying, during thirty-five years, a supernumerary, unpaid post in a large Parisian parish. There, suffering from gout in the eyes and brain, and usually lying prone in a darkened room, he served souls with the supreme authority of self-oblivious love, and brought light and purity and heart to countless troubled, sorrowing, or sinful souls.[21]

Von Hugel was especially attracted to the virile, expansive quality of Huvelin's sanctity. In this master of the struggles of the soul, von Hugel found a man who did not oppose critical learning to intensity of devotion. He discovered one who learned to know him even better than he knew himself. "Huvelin possessed an uncanny power of directing the baron away from his particular temptations of worrying, succumbing to his physical weaknesses, taking upon himself too heavy a share of responsibility for others."[22] Writing in 1916 to Professor Sonnenschein, von Hugel listed some of the points which were to him "winged words and fiery darts."[23]

> La Priere sera, pour vous, plutot etat qu'acte precis et delibere.
> La verite est, pour vous, un point lumineux qui se perd, peu a peu, dans l'obscurite.
> Il n'y a pas de regle de security dans les travaux critiques:
> La Priere, eviter l'obstination -- voila tout.

21. EL, pp. 374, 375
22. Bedoyere, op. cit., p. 44
23. A collection of some of the sayings of Abbe Huvelin is found in SL, pp. 57-63

Von Hugel drew freely from the work of the Classical Catholic theologians. He most frequently acknowledged his debt to St. Thomas Aquinas, who not only worked out the most satisfying approach for him to the relation of nature and supernature, reason and faith, sense and spirit, but also taught him to think and write systematically. But this influence was strongly tempered by his indebtedness to St. Augustine. His eclectic use of both prevented him from being classified as either a Thomist or an Augustinian.

Without a doubt, there was one period in the history of the Church which was the most attractive and the most influential upon von Hugel's spiritual development. This was the Pre-Reformation period of the Italian Christian Renaissance. In his Preface to the first edition of THE MYSTICAL ELEMENT, while describing the interests which produced his two volume work, he states:

> Born as I was in Italy, certain early impressions have never left me; a vivid consciousness has been with me, almost from the first, of the massively virile personalities, the spacious, trustful times of the early, as yet truly Christian, Renaissance there, from Dante on to the Florentine Platonists. And when, on growing up, I acquired strong and definite religious convictions, it was that ampler Pre-Protestant, as yet neither Protestant nor anti-Protestant, but deeply positive and Catholic, world, with its already characteristically modern outlook and its hopeful and spontaneous application of religion to the pressing problems of life and thought, which helped to strengthen and sustain me, when depressed and hemmed in by the types of devotion prevalent since then in Western Christendom. For those early modern times presented me with men of the same general instincts and outlook as my own, but environed by the priceless boon and starting-point of a still undivided Western Christendom; Protestantism, as such, continued to be felt as ever more or less unjust and sectarian; and the specifically post-Tridentine type of Catholicism, with its regimental Seminarism, its predominantly con-

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> troversial spirit, its suspiciousness and timidity, persisted, however inevitable some of it may be, in its failure to win my love. Hence I had to continue the seeking and the finding elsewhere, yet ever well within the great Roman Church, things more intrinsically lovable. The wish some day to portray one of those large-souled Pre-Protestant, post-Mediaeval Catholics, was thus early and has been long at work within me.[24]

Not that von Hugel advocated a "return" to any historical epoch! But the "genial expansiveness" of that period stood in judgment upon what he considered a more "contracted" age and thus was capable of giving direction to "modern times." "The spacious outlook and virile depth and tenacity of that early Catholic Renaissance still fire my blood; neither Protestantism as such (so pathetically understandable, yet so largely unjust because ungenerous), nor a bitter, puny anti-Protestantism, a Catholicism contracted to a mere negation of negations, or to a system of the greatest possible exclusion of trouble, trial, and danger can (so all my being tells me) be the final, God-willed solution for all the battles, heroisms, faults, sins and glories of so many centuries of Western Christendom."[25]

Out of this general period two figures especially attracted his attention and engaged his study. His investigation and admiration of St. Catherine of Genoa was one of his most influential experiences. He found in her a "soul of most rare spiritual depth, -- a soul that presents, with an extraordinary, provocative vividness, the greatness, helps, problems and dangers of the mystical spirit." He then became anxious, spiritual explorer that

24. MER I, pp. xxi, xxii
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The second figure from which he constantly drew inspiration was Cardinal Nicolas of Coes, the precursor of modern philosophy. Here was a symbol of the "ever necessary, the ever difficult, the ever noble harmonies achievable by man." Nicolas exemplified the type of Churchman which the Baron increasingly sought to become. "Christianity, Neo-Platonism, the Teutonic spirit, the early Renaissance; authority and liberty, Society and the individual, the depths of faith, the clarities of reason, the vigor of action, the warm, life-welcoming and life-giving expansion and embrace of love: all these even individually great and difficult things met, in a rarely full and perfect degree and manner, in this noble precursor and adumbrator of the modern spirit at its very best and deepest."[27]

Among his contemporaries von Hugel acknowledged his obligations to the most diversified list of men. Intellectual agreement or similarity of temperament was never demanded as the precondition of a friendship or teacher-

26. MER I, pp. xxii, xxiii
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27. MRA II, p. 92

student relationship. This is illustrated most clearly in his relationship to Dr. W. G. "Ideal" Ward, the strongly reactionary, ultramontanist. "It will be well to remember von Hugel's understanding of the 'bigoted' Ward and his deep sympathy with him, just as it will be well to remember his failure to understand and sympathize with the 'liberal' Newman; for Newman was engaged in persuading himself of something not wholly and fully rooted in his psychological and moral being, whereas Ward's faith, or faiths, sprang utterly from the man."[28] Although von Hugel differed with him on many scores, especially on the scope of Ecclesiastical authority, he wrote, "I can say of him, in my smaller way, what Cardinal Newman said of Dr. Whately: 'He emphatically opened my mind, and taught me to think and use my reason.'"[29]

Perhaps his greatest debt to Ward, and one which was to influence all of his later work, was his sense of the religious significance of the, so-called, secular spheres of life. He claimed that it was Ward:

> who first taught me that the supernatural should not be directly identified and measured by the amount of its conscious, explicit references to Christ or even simply to God, but by certain qualities . . . of which heroism, with a keen sense of givenness and of 'I could not do otherwise,' appear to be the chief. Thus a man may perform a truly supernatural act, or be in a genuinely supernatural condition of soul, and yet may possess, at the time or even generally, only the most dim and confused -- a quite inadequate -- theology.[30]

It was the Baron's practice to take the initiative in writing or visiting any person whose scholarly work attracted his attention. Thus, in 1898 he returned to London via

28. Bedoyere, op. cit., p. 35
29. Ibid., p. 34
30. E&A I, p. 280

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Germany where, in Jena, he had four "philosophic talks" with Professor Eucken. His thought was strongly influenced at that time by the German philosopher and his reactions to this philosophy give some indication of his frame of mind prior to the Modernist controversy. Eucken's philosophy was in reaction to what he considered a barren Naturalism. Although his foundation was Idealistic, he sought to build up a Concrete Idealism imbued with an ethical passion. Both of the prevailing systems -- the classical, aesthetic system of the imparting of form and the modern dynamic system of the development of force were dismissed as inadequate. They both tended to glide too quickly over the problem of evil, and the world of historic fact and freedom. In the face of these needs Eucken proposed his view of the "Production of Personality." Von Hugel saw in this a point of view "specially competent to reconcile unity and multimplicity, to free us from that intellectualism which we can neither bear nor otherwise abolish, and to clear up the uses and abuses of the historical method."[31] Significantly, however, he criticized Eucken's "uncertain and inconsistent" attitude toward positive historical religion and his failure to analyze the category of "personality" in terms of its metaphysical implications.

Even more important than the influence of Eucken was that of Ernst Troeltsch. Von Hugel first met him in Heidelberg in 1902 and from that time until the death of Troeltsch there was a consistent interchange of ideas and stimulation. In a paper published in 1914 devoted to an

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exposition of his thought, von Hugel wrote: "For now over twenty years I have learnt quite massively from Troeltsch, as much where regretfully but firmly I still disagree, as where, so joyfully, I agreed from the first with all that I am. Possibly no Englishman, probably no American, knows his mind and works as intimately as I know them myself."[32]

In spite of the tendencies in the latter writings of Troeltsch with which von Hugel heartily disagreed,[33] he was deeply indebted to him at many important points. It was the Protestant Troeltsch who strengthened many of the "Catholic principles" of von Hugel at the time when he was especially involved in the Modernist controversy. While it would be an exaggeration to say that Troeltsch taught him to appreciate St. Thomas, it was certainly true that the insight derived from DIE SOZIALLEHREN DER CHRISTLICHEN KIRCHEN UND GRUPPEN greatly aided his understanding of the Doctor Angelicus and his own exposition of a Critical Realist philosophy. Von Hugel especially valued the emphasis of Troeltsch on the interrelation of Body and Soul in the religious life. "Professor Ernst Troeltsch, so free from natural prejudice in favour of such a Sense-and-Spirit position, has become perhaps the most adequate exponent of this great fact of life, which is ever in such danger of evaporation amidst the intellectual and leading minority of men."[34] Troeltsch also influenced von Hugel by his ex-

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33. LN, p. xxxv, see also von Hugel's Introduction to the essays of Troeltsch in CHRISTIAN THOUGHT, ITS HISTORY AND APPLICATION
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position of the polarity of religious experience -- of this-worldliness and attachment and of other-worldliness and detachment. He struck a responsive chord with his emphasis on the Ontological, Theistic sense; the insight into the abiding need of association and external worship for a vigorous religious life; and the constant remembrance that God's Spirit works also outside of Christendom.

In 1921 von Hugel wrote to Professor Rene Cuiran of Lausanne: "Et, par un des tours paradox aux si nombreux de la vie, ne me trouve, moi, catholique convaincu, profondement aide a bien m'epanouir, precisement en ce catholicisme de mon ame, par le lutherien Troeltsch et le calviniste Kemp Smith, plus ou moins contre les catholiques Blondel et Laberthonniere."[35] The mention of Professor Kemp Smith, of Edinburgh University, suggests a final philosophic influence which must be noted in von Hugel's life. The development of his thought in the direction of Critical Realism will be traced more fully in the chapter dealing with his Epistemology. Here it will be sufficient to indicate his indebtedness to the Realist current which he traced in its first and still largely unsurpassed exponent, Plato; in modern times in Thomas Reid, intermittently in Kant, Lotze, Cook Wilson, Kemp Smith, E. Adickes, Oswald Kulpe and W. E. Hocking. He fully realized the ill-defined character of much that passed under the name of Realism and the relative value of this for religious purposes. "Of course, much more remains to do in this direction, and equally of course this school does not exhaust all the

35. SL, p. 334

elements of truth to be attained. It will reach its zenith, and will thereupon grow hard and incapable of further acquisitions, and will finally, for a time, be supplanted by one or other of its rivals."[36]

Von Hugel would be the last thinker to seek for religious novelty or claim originality. He sought only to understand and describe the deepest elements of the religious life, getting help from any available source. His real originality, however, is best seen in the variety of people to whom he acknowledged debt and the utilization of these helps in the construction of his own religious philosophy.

III. Modernist Controversy

The story of the "Modernist Controversy" which raged in the Roman Catholic Church during the early years of the twentieth century has been written and re-written from every possible perspective.[37] It is not within the scope of this thesis to retrace the vicissitudes or values of that movement. Still, no biographical chapter dealing with von Hugel would be at all complete without some reference to what Michael de la Bedoyere calls, "The Terrible Years." This struggle consumed a vast amount of his strength. It was the occasion, directly and indirectly, for much of his most mature and penetrating writing. It formed the background for his analysis of the place of the mystic in the

36. MER I, p. xvii
37. Three perspectives on this movement can be gained from Petre, M. D., AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND LIFE OF GEORGE TYRRELL: Loisy, A. F., MY DUEL WITH THE VATICAN, New York (Dutton), 1924, trans. by R. W. Boynton; and Riviere, J., LE MODERNISME DANS L'EGLISE, Paris (Letouzey), 1929

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The conditions, especially in England, which formed the intellectual background of this controversy have been described by von Hugel in connection with his unfinished study of his agnostic friend, Sir Alfred Lyall.[38] Throughout the nineteenth century churches and traditional theologies had suffered a consistent series of defeats at the hands of the powerful and popular scientific minds. Darwin and Wallace issued their joint conclusions in 1858, and with Darwin's ORIGIN OF SPECIES in 1859 many pious churchmen felt their doctrine of creation to be lost. Lyell published his ANTIQUITY OF MAN in 1863; Darwin his DESCENT OF MAN in 1871; and in 1874 Professor Tyndall produced his highly polemical FIRE-IRON. "And, meanwhile, Professor Huxley was pouring cheerful scorn upon the anti-Darwinian Anglican bishops, and canonizing Descartes and Hume, especially in their agnostic constituents."[39] This mood of a religiously tempered

38. RG, pp. 196, 197
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But another movement was also in progress. In 1899 Wilfred Ward wrote: "We are now witnessing a religious reaction . . . . There is a strong tendency to fall back upon the old religious beliefs, and upon the old liturgies and formulae in which they were embodied -- not indeed with the clear definite faith of early days, yet with a vague and undefined sense of their worth, and of the barrenness and solitariness of an existence from which they are totally banished."[40]

In the face of this situation there inevitably occurred the ferment of dissatisfaction among younger clerics and lay Roman Catholic philosophers, such as Olle-Laprune and Maurice Blondel, whose book L'ACTION had created something of a sensation. The older scholasticism was felt to be incompetent to cope with current problems. Not only was the Christian message falling into discredit due to its unnecessary intellectual accretions, it was becoming increasingly irrelevant to the major concerns of modern man. Along with

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Blondel, Laberthonniere and Sabatier were championing the emphasis on anti-rationalism and Immanence.

With such a protest, ill-defined as it was, von Hugel was naturally sympathetic. His innate suspicion of the merely conventional; his growing interest in mysticism; his insistence on "subjective truthfulness," his confidence in the validity, if limited value, of the scientific method in religious concerns; his natural boldness and love of adventure; all of this united to draw him heart and soul into what he believed was a necessary movement for the revitalization of the Church.

Of his two major interests -- Biblical Criticism and Mysticism -- it was the former which drew him most readily into the thick of the battle, although he maintained an active interest in every phase of the struggle. This field of study gave him the finest opportunity to express his passion for scientific research. He also saw this as the area par excellence where the evidence for the Christian religion in contemporary eyes was to be made or broken. Only if the problems could be honestly faced could the Church hope to make an impact upon the current secular mind. Furthermore, the values of the new Biblical studies would immensely enrich the life of the Church. Although von Hugel's Biblical studies were largely dependent upon the critical work of specialists in this field, his own contribution is none the less significant. He first became well known among savants through his paper read at the International Catholic Congress at Freidburg in 1897, in which he made a complete

exposition of the results of criticism, so far, upon part of the Old Testament.[41] His article in the ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA, 11th ed., on "John, Gospel of St." is an indication of the thoroughness of his scholarship and the fruitful use he made of the contributions of many authorities.

Behind all of von Hugel's Biblical studies can be seen the figure of Alfred Loisy, whose friendship colored most of the Baron's relationship to the Modernist movement. It was his Hebrew teacher, Gustav Bicknell, who first recommended Loisy's books, and von Hugel had no sooner read them than he in turn recommended them, with characteristic enthusiasm, to all of his friends, especially his learned non-Catholic acquaintances, like Driver, Robertson Smith and Montefiore. By 1903 his position was almost identical with that of Loisy's L'EVANGILE ET L'EGLISE; although there was a deep-lying difference which, with its results, became increasingly apparent as the two men followed out their thinking to very opposite conclusions. On the question of freedom for scientific inquiry in Biblical matters the two seemed to stand shoulder to shoulder. Both believed that there was a way to be found to reconcile the sublime truths of the Catholic faith with the stubborn world of historic fact, which must be honestly and freely pursued. In 1903 von Hugel wrote: "We have to live and to create, not a simple thing, sincere science, but a complex thing, complex, costly, but consoling, as is all life that is real and lived . . . .

41. Published later in English and French under the title of THE HISTORICAL METHOD AND THE DOCUMENTS OF THE HEXATEUCH.

sincere science in and with profound and historical religion, in and with a Catholicism living because always renewed and re-experimented. Now it is exactly in this combination that lies the difficulty; to dedicate one's life to it is that, I believe, which is the most gloriously devoted and painfully costing thing in the world."[42]

On this score they "seemed" to stand together. And yet even on this issue, at this early date, there are evidences that, fundamentally, they were moving from a different foundation. In the place of von Hugel's tension between "sincere science" and "profound and historical religion" Loisy, in his passion for the scientific method, gave evidence of a too simple adaptation of the Biblical revelation to the Procrustean bed of empirical a priorism. He based all of his labors on the principle that "the rights of science on everything which is an object of knowledge cannot be limited."[43]

Throughout all of Loisy's subsequent struggles von Hugel's personal attachment did not waiver. Von Hugel defended him when Loisy no longer wanted his defense and when, to defend Loisy's Catholicity, verged on the ridiculous. Nevertheless their differences constantly became more apparent and von Hugel in time came to see how far Loisy's Immanentism and his RELIGION L'HUMANITE were from his own understanding of the Christian faith. Their divergences were noted by von Hugel in a letter to Bishop Edward Talbot in 1910,[44] and worked out more fully in 1921 in his letter to Professor

42. SL, p. 21
43. Loisy, A., MEMOIRES, pp. 386, 387
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Rene Guiran:[45]

> La difference capitale et decisive m'apparait donc maintenant etre la difference entre la Religion concue comme phenomene purement intra humain, non evidentiel au dela des aspirations de la race humaine; et la Religion concue comme essentiellement evidentielle, metaphysique, l'effet en nous de plus que nous -- de plus que n'importe quels faits et desirs purement humains . . . Monsieur Loisy -- mon ami toujours tres cher -- je le dis avec detresse et amertume d'ame -- a perdu -- je prie Dieu seulement pour un temps -- ce sens evidentiel, realiste, metaphysique -- ce sens de plus que notre pensee, de plus que tout juste ce que nour experimentons en la Religion.

Even more important than his contacts with Loisy, especially in relation to his interests in mysticism, was von Hugel's intimate friendship with Father George Tyrrell. In the fascinating history of human friendships few can compare in intensity and pathos with that of von Hugel, the layman, and Tyrrell, the Jesuit priest. This story has been written by Miss Maude Petre who knew both of them intimately through the Modernist struggle.[46] In typical fashion von Hugel wrote to Tyrrell in 1897 after enthusiastically reading, buying and recommending his NOVA ET VETERA. This was the beginning of a pastoral relationship between Father Tyrrell and both von Hugel and his daughter Gertrude. It served to introduce Tyrrell to the latest findings in Biblical Criticism and contemporary continental philosophy. It fructified the work of both men in theological studies; especially the relation of the mystical and institutional elements in religion. It welded together in an inseparable bond two of the most

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sensitive spirits and penetrating minds in England to share the common concerns of the Modernist struggle.

The picture of the two men -- the bearded Baron with his "new geological hammer" chipping away in the pits and his priest friend in flat hat, clerical collar and tight black suit -- naturally suggests some striking contrasts.

> The two men were obviously of markedly contrasting temperaments: the orderly, scrupulous, intensely concentrating, deeply devout, German-Scottish scholar, and the temperamental, volatile, sceptical-mystical, Irish convert-priest. But their deeper similarities were to outweigh these differences, at least for a period. For both were passionate, courageous, and vehement in their different ways. Both shared a passion for truth, in so far as they could see it, and a horror of pretense. Both, understood that reality was ultimately religious and religion an imposture when not a reality. Nor was it out of character in the case of either of them that his first contact was to be in a measure the contact of the Catholic layman seeking the help of the Catholic priest.[47]

Von Hugel spoke of Tyrrell in 1902 as his "intensely alive, immensely impulsive and hence astonishingly, most meritoriously and fruitfully balanced Friend!"[48] But the maintenance of this delicate balance was a life-long unsuccessful attempt on the part of Tyrrell. In 1905 von Hugel described his friend's personality problem in a way very typical of his frequent psychological analysis:

> I often think with deep sympathy and a good deal of downright pain, of how much God has given you to suffer. I doubt altogether whether <u>you</u> would have escaped much suffering even though you had never seen an S. J.; indeed had never become a Priest or a Catholic at all; although you would, of course, have escaped much, at least if the first of these three possible alternatives had obtained with you. For I always feel that the initial, the all-englobing, all-aggravating, yet (of course) also all-fructifying peculiarity of

47. Bedoyere, op. cit., p. 100
48. SL, p. 115

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[47]. Bedoyere, op. cit., p. 100

[48]. Op. cit., p. 115

> your case, -- for which neither St. Ignatius the Pope, or even Christ, but only God, in the mysterious constitution of life and of our mixed natures, is responsible, -- is that mentally you apprehend, and more and more, the exceeding variety in unity of all reality, and the slow, ever incomplete, ever correction-begging character of all our apprehensions, still more of all our livings of them; whereas emotionally, you are prime sauteur, hic et nunc, neck-or-nothing to an equally rare degree. A German brain, an Irish heart: can there be a more fruitful combination, if the owner is heroically faithful? Can there be, faithful or not, a more costing, adventurous one?49

The friendship was a "costing" one to both parties, psychologically and socially. Always closer to Tyrrell in underlying spirit, von Hugel constantly sought to shield Loisy who cared little for his own ecclesiastical relationship. But he never spared Tyrrell from being the object of his most stringent criticism and understanding censure. His criticism of Tyrrell's paper "Da Dio o Dagli Uomini," two years before the priest's death, serves as an indication of his growing sense of the importance of the "otherness" of God and his basic difference from the prevailing Modernist spirit.

> I feel strongly, somehow, that your treatment of the old transcendent conception of God as requiring to be reformulated, en toutes pieces, by an immanental one, is somehow a bit of most tempting, yet nevertheless impoverishing, simplification. God is certainly not, in any degree or sense, simply (spatially) outside of, or above, us; and these spatial pictures have indeed all to be interpreted in terms of spiritual experience and spiritual reality. But this experience itself is essentially as truly of God transcendent as of God immanent; of a Spirit indefinitely more spiritual, a reality which is nobler and of a higher nature than our highest, and leaves us with a noble thirst -- as well as of this same Spirit as penetrating us through and through, and as satisfying our cravings. If one were to take

49. SL, pp. 131, 132

> your clear-cut Immanentism as final and complete, that noblest half of the religious experience of tip-toe expectation, of unfulfilled aspiration, of sense of Divine Life, of which our own but touches the outskirts, would have no place. I see that by the emphatic admission of this (I think quite essential) Dualism of spiritual experience and movement, it is more difficult to formulate a rigorously coherent criticism of the absolutist authority conception than is yours here. Still, you are so right in your general conclusions, and yet the preliminary point I refer to seems to me so certain, -- that I cannot doubt them to be, somehow, reconcilable, -- although I do not clearly see how, just now at least. . . .[50]

Von Hugel's most heretical act would appear to be his unflinching loyalty to his Modernist friends. When accused of being the author of the famous "Lettres Romaines" he failed to deny this attribution in order to protect the real author, who was actually unknown to him. In 1907 he was listed for the first and last time in a Roman "censure." Cardinal Steinhuber, Prefect of the Index, had written a letter, published in the Osservatore Romano to the Archbishop of Milan condemning the "so-called Catholics" who "in their pride presumed to be masters and doctors of the Church" in their running of the review, Rinnovamento, and expressly named Fogazzara, Tyrrell, Murri and von Hugel.[51] It was in his letter to Tyrrell on Nov. 20, 1907 that von Hugel expressed his strongest sentiments in the direction of personal ecclesiastical rebellion. He said that condemnation was practically necessary for "the substance of what we want and must have . . . . We have to make a new mentality, a new psychosis, we cannot do so unless we hold out. And the risk of having to do without

50. SL, p. 139
51. Bedoyere, op. cit., p. 191

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30. Bl, p. 139
31. Redoyere, op. cit., p. 191

the Sacraments, for a while at least, would not prove disastrous, where the situation was critical and the motives were as Catholic as one can say without presumption, they are here."[52]

Subsequent events involving the condemnation and excommunication of Loisy and Tyrrell and the issuing of the Pascendi Dominici Gregis need not detain us in this connection. It is significant, however, for purposes of this thesis, to note the increasing alienation which developed between von Hugel and the Modernists at this time, being much in evidence by 1910, and continuing through the following years. To attribute this to a lack of courage on his part seems to completely misunderstand the Baron's position. His significant differences from Loisy and Tyrrell have already been indicated. These were far-reaching when the implications were more rapidly worked out.

In 1910 he wrote to Loisy that "there exist cold, decent, even distinguished fanaticisms which are very understandable, and almost entirely excusable, but which in the end are fanaticisms, doctrinairisms of the Left corresponding to fanaticism of the Right and feeding these perhaps more than anything else."[53] Von Hugel now saw his task as one of determining the "via media" between these two fanaticisms. In a diary entry consisting of a long list of friends whom his Literary Executor, Edmund Gardner, could trust he includes among the "Blacks" the extremes of both the Right and Left, and especially those with whom he once

52. Quoted in Bedoyere, op. cit., p. 206
53. Loisy, A., op. cit., Vol. III, p. 160

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52. Quoted in Bedoyere, op. cit., p. 206
53. Loisy, A., op. cit., Vol. III, p. 150

had some sympathy but who had now veered to extremes; the "Whites" were the consistent moderates.[54] In writing to Clement Webb he analysed the situation as:

> the increasing prevalence of but two forces, which certainly each is the very stimulant and producer of the other -- a tyrannous Transcendentalism and a sceptical Immanentism. Is it not right, a duty, to point out that the Ontological element of Religion does not necessarily involve those abuses and hence the escape into a pure Immanentism; and to show how tyrannous, and hence again productive of the counter-tyranny, can be or become such Immanentism, which, besides, kills religion and with it all Religion's special benefits?[55]

It is surely a question, as legitimate as it is difficult, whether von Hugel was "a" or "the" leader in the Modernist movement. Miss Maude Petre believes " . . . . he was not only essentially modernist, but arch-modernist, and the original leader of the cause in England."[56] Professor Jean Riviere makes him the hidden instigator of every revolt and apostacy. He accuses him of being blinded by self-interest and itching to assert himself in bringing about disaster.[57] These, especially the latter, may be exaggerated. Still, his powerful influence cannot be denied, especially in the early stages of the conflict. Paul Sabatier, who looked on him as a kind of "lay bishop to the Modernists" gives a vivid description of the Baron's quiet pervasive leadership at a meeting in Molteno, in the Italian Tyrol:

> During three days they exchanged ideas as to action and hopes . . . . Friedrich von Hugel was there also, but with his usual humility he listened, effaced

54. Bedoyere, op. cit., p. 241
55. Quoted in Bedoyere, op. cit., p. 247
56. Petre, M., "George Tyrrell and F. v.H. in their relation to Catholic Modernism" in "The Modern Churchman," June, 1927, p. 144
57. Riviere, J., op. cit., pp. 199, 267, 273, 280, 391, 398 400, 533

> himself. However, on the day of departure he assembled all the friends into his room, and addressed to them words at once so simple and so burning that those who had the happiness to hear them have kept them as the souvenir of one of those moments when life appears to us at the same time transfigured and yet real, when we become conscious of the mysterious forces which are within us and yet dominate and go beyond us. The priest who, lowering his voice through emotion, described to me this scene some months later, added that those present thought of St. Paul taking leave of the elders of the Church of Ephesus.

The Baron himself entered this note in his diary: "Thursday 29th August. Breakfast at 6:30. Made a little parting speech, reading them Loisy's last letter, and dwelling on the necessity of sincere, thorough critical work, of deep self-renouncing Christian life, of careful charity and magnaminity towards our opponents."[58]

Nevertheless, Archbishop Goodier was right in saying that, "men were conscious that to include him with other Modernists, was somehow incongruous and unjust. He was different, he was far too great."[59] Even among the prominent leaders in the movement it was generally felt that von Hugel was, and was not, one of them. Loisy considered him as a liaison officer who never tried to be a leader. As their differences became more acute Loisy came to believe that the Baron was too intelligent to be a Catholic but did not possess the courage to accept the logical consequences of his radical unbelief. "To Loisy's <u>simpliste</u> French logic of all or nothing the Baron's position seemed intolerable. But rather than leave it at that and argue the question on

58. Quoted in SL, p. 22
59. Goodier, A., BARON F. v. H.'s SPIRITUAL OUTLOOK, in "The Month," Jan. 1929, p. 12

its merits, Loisy convinced himself that the Baron's views were the consequence of a morbid and diseased mind affected by a species of religious mania about God's transcendence."[60] What appeared to von Hugel as the sincere attempt to escape "a tyrannous Transcendentalism and a sceptical Immanentism" and to hold necessary elements in a "costing but fruitful tension" appeared as sheer inconsistency to even his closest associates. The following dialogue, probably written by Tyrrell, illustrates this:

> The Baron: There can be no doubt that Our Lady failed to occupy her proper place at the crucifixion; the evidence of the Synoptic writers makes this clear.
>
> The Friend: Yes? But it is a long way from this to the "Salve Regina!"
>
> The Baron: There can be no doubt that Our Lord's faith broke down on Calvary.
>
> The Friend: Yes? But it is a long way from this to the Nicene Creed.
>
> The Baron: There can be no doubt that St. Paul's teaching on the Eucharist is based upon certain forms of Syrian Nature-worship.
>
> The Friend: Yes? But it is a long way from this to the "Tantum Ergo!"
>
> The Baron: I hear the Angelus; I must go and make my evening visit to the Blessed Sacrament![61]

In a letter to Miss Maude Petre, from the less heated perspective of 1918, von Hugel states his relation to two phases of Modernism.[62] The Modernist Movement, as such, including its variously mixed efforts and positions is largely a matter of past history with little present interest. But Modernism, in the sense of the never-finished task of

60. Bedoyere, op. cit., pp. 242,243
61. Quoted in Bedoyere, op. cit., pp. 214, 215
62. SL, pp. 247, 248

relating the old Faith, with permanent truths and helps, to the most abiding elements of current philosophy and science, continues to be his main interest, as it has been throughout his life. For him, the battle for freedom in Biblical Criticism was neither wasted nor finished. His letter to Charles A. Briggs sets forth the perspective from which he viewed that fight.[63] That victory, as he understood it, might come slowly. But it would come. He indicates the special reasons for a justified patience by citing the Roman Catholic treatment of the Areopagite Writings and the "Comma Johanneum" (I John 5:7), both of which "interested theologians far more directly than ever the Pentateuch did." His confidence in this triumph is also based on four basic characteristics of the Roman Catholic Church: 1) Catholicism is not a simple Illuminism or Fideism, but a complete religion including the Historical and Institutional, Critical and Speculative, and Mystical and Operative elements; 2) Catholicism is missionary and must learn from the people it teaches; 3) Catholicism stands for Church "and" Bible, not Bible only; 4) Catholicism is a growing organism.

As von Hugel emerged from the heated controversy his emphasis on the necessity and importance of an abiding historical nucleus for the Christian faith; the "Otherness" of God; the necessity, even if costly, of Church appurtenance; and the need for a Critical Realist philosophical context for the presentation of the Christian faith set the direction for his future thought and work. Significantly, his

63. THE PAPAL COMMISSION AND THE PENTATEUCH

63. THE PAPAL CONDEMNATION AND THE PENTATEUCH

work on Mysticism was progressing simultaneously with the "Terrible Years." While for many, mysticism opens the door for rebellion against institutional and historical interests, for von Hugel the experience led in the opposite direction. "But whereas Biblical criticism was then a burning topic that led directly to criticism of the institutional side of the Church as a whole, mysticism was an affair for the few and von Hugel's realistic approach to it was likely to support rather than challenge the Catholic tradition. Loisy, let us remember, came more and more to refer to the Baron's 'mysticism' (here used in a wider and looser sense) as the pitiful explanation of his refusal to follow him into the kind of Comtist Positivism which he called the 'religion of Humanity.'"[64]

IV. Writings -- Addresses -- Letters

"I never first decide to write a thing, and then concoct it; the thing has to form in my mind and has then to force its way into print."[65] This was von Hugel's own analysis of his writing procedure and it enables one to understand the unusual stories behind each of his major publications.

His first and largest work, really his magnum opus, THE MYSTICAL ELEMENT OF RELIGION, was published in 1908, when he was fifty-six years of age. In many ways this work involved a life-time of study. Actually it represented ten years of the most penetrating investigation and scholarship.

64. Bedoyere, op. cit., p. 111
65. F. v. H. to Maude Petre, 29th Nov. 1912; quoted in Bedoyere, op. cit., p. 221

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Begun as a short magazine article on the unusual mystical saint, Catherine Fiesca Adorna, whose shrine in Genoa had long been a place of pilgrimage for the Baron, the work developed into encyclopedic proportions comprising two volumes with a total of nearly 900 packed pages. This was typical of von Hugel's method of work. After finding an intriguing subject he would press every possible avenue of inquiry. In the case of St. Catherine he used the historical-critical methods recently found so fruitful in Biblical scholarship and applied them to the various conflicting accounts of her life. Then, after a thorough examination of her life and influence, he used the problems thus raised to indicate the relationship of mysticism to psychology, philosophy, and theology. "Thus, having begun to write a biography of St. Catherine, with some philosophical elucidations, I have finished by writing an essay on the philosophy of Mysticism, illustrated by the life of Caterinetta Fiesca Adorna and her friends."[66] It is in this work that von Hugel develops his triad of necessary "elements" -- the institutional, the intellectual and the mystical. Concerning this William Temple wrote: "The most striking section of it -- the introduction -- has so deeply permeated the thought of our time that its leading conception has become a common-place among many who have never read the book or even who have never heard of it." [67]

The publication of ETERNAL LIFE in 1912 had an equally unusual inception. Dr. Hastings had invited him to contri-

66. MER I, p. xxiii
67. Quoted in Bedoyere, op. cit., p. 223

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bute an article by this title to his ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF RELIGION AND ETHICS. Inadvertently he remarked that it might be "as long as you like." This grew into a nearly 400 page book which the editor happily arranged to publish as a separate work. More symmetrical and lucidly written than THE MYSTICAL ELEMENT this book is largely a summary of the great thinkers on this subject -- the Hebrew prophets, St. John and St. Paul, Plotinus and Dionysius, Augustine and Aquinas, Eckhart and Spinoza, Kant and Hegel, Schliermacher, Troeltsch and numerous others. The concluding chapter on "Institutional Religion" is one of his finest treatments of this theme. Dr. Hastings wrote of this book "I believe that it is the most thorough investigation of the subject that has ever been made."[68] In recommending this book to his niece the Baron said, "I wrote the thing praying; read it as written, child!"[69]

In 1916 he published a small volume entitled THE GERMAN SOUL. This simply-written book deals with the problems of nationalism from the perspective of a Christian supra-nationalism. Coming during the war years from one who was classified as an "enemy-alien" (although his sympathies were wholly on the side of the Allies) it constitutes a courageous protest against the unbridled denunciations of the German people and the German character which were so common at that time.

Von Hugel is probably best known and his influence most widely extended through the two series of ESSAYS AND

68. Quoted in Bedoyere, op. cit., p. 223
69. Quoted in Bedoyere, op. cit., p. 267

ADDRESSES ON THE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION which were issued, the first in 1921 and the second, after his death, in 1926. These reflect a variety of interests and occasions and are generally conceded to be the most easily read of his works. His "What Do We Mean By Heaven? And What Do We Mean By Hell?" was first delivered to the Religious Thought Society of London in February, 1917. His "On Certain Central Needs of Religion, and the Difficulties of Liberal Movements in Face of the Needs: As Experienced Within the Roman Catholic Church During the Last Forty Years" was given to a select group of friends in Dr. Alexander Whyte's study on July 7, 1914. One of his most significant addresses was "Suffering and God," originally given to the London Society for the Study of Religion in May, 1921. To a small group of Anglicans attending a conference on prayer at Beaconsfield, he read the papers entitled "The Facts and Truths Concerning God and the Soul Which Are of Most Importance in the Life of Prayer." These were later republished in a separate booklet called "The Life of Prayer." These are typical of the experiences which occasioned these writings.

The clearest revelation of the Baron's interior life is expressed in his numerous and voluminous letters. Writing on the most diversified questions, the Baron would pour out his soul in seeking to help others in their understanding and experience of the Christian life. Many consider his essay "On the Preliminaries to Religious Belief and On the Facts of Suffering, Faith and Love" to be his masterpiece. Yet these 8000 words, printed in the first series of ESSAYS AND ADDRESSES, were written in rough

draft in the course of four busy December days of 1913 to a lady whose daughter of eighteen months had died and who consequently asked "how much suffering could be permitted by a God said to be all-good and all-powerful?" A letter of similar length was written in June 1912 to advise a mother about the moral guidance of her son. Fortunately we have two invaluable volumes of his correspondence: the SELECTED LETTERS, edited by Bernard Holland and published in 1926, and his LETTERS FROM BARON VON HUGEL TO A NIECE, written to Mrs. Gwendolen Greene and published in 1928.

In 1931 a posthumous work was published, entitled THE REALITY OF GOD: AND RELIGION AND AGNOSTICISM. This volume contains the fragments of two studies which he did not live to finish. The first section, upon which he was at work up to the time of his death, consists of his most systematic presentation of his Critical Realist philosophy. This was to have been the basis of his Gifford Lectures. Its theme is "The Reality of Finites, and the Reality of God." Evelyn Underhill states that if this had been finished it "would have given us something as near to a system as was possible to so richly generous, so unfenced a mind."[70] The second section of this work was begun in 1912, laid aside at the outbreak of the war, and never resumed. It is a study of the Agnosticism of his friend, Sir Alfred Lyall, the Indian administrator.

The quotations already used and those which follow are sufficient to indicate the peculiarities of the Baron's "Germanic style." The content was always predominate; the

70. Underhill, E., MIXED PASTURE, p. 218

form of but secondary interest, if at all. Although he constantly read and wrote in German, English, Italian and French, he claimed that seven-tenths of his reading had been done in German. This may explain something of the obscure style which characterizes his major works written in English. The reaction of Father Tyrrell to his labored expression is typical of the reaction of many of his contemporaries:

> Your paper on "Official Authority" requires awful concentration of attention. For you each word is chosen and placed with full explicit consciousness and meaning. But what audience will appreciate that? Not even the Cherubim and Searphim. I think you might consider the average mind a little more. It was the same with your most wonderful "Synthetic" paper, which you stuffed like a tight sausage. Solid, liquid, gas -- are the three forms in which thought can be presented; the last for an audience, the second for a book, the first for an Archangel in retreat.[71]

Still, his style is not without some commendable qualities, and it did improve in his later writings. The illustrations and analogies used in his ESSAYS AND ADDRESSES are frequently of the highest calibre. Then, too, all of his writing and speaking was stamped with the impression of the Baron's religious earnestness. Kemp Smith wrote: "Your style has that personal quality which makes it for me, at least, more and more attractive, and lends to your argument an added charm and persuasiveness, from the sense it affords of being the outcome of a life's rich experience."[72]

Von Hugel had no ambition to become a "popular writer." He cared for no superficial readers of his

71. Father Tyrrell to F. v. H. March 20, 1904. Quoted in SL, p. 13
72. Kemp Smith to F. v. H. Oct. 30, 1921. Quoted in Bedoyere, op. cit., p. 320

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MYSTICAL ELEMENT. "Hence only by one who has studied and pondered the book as a whole, will any of its parts be criticised with fairness to that part's intention. To gain even by a dozen of such readers would amply repay the labour of these many years."[73] Thus, his writing was consciously for a select group of thinkers who would "slowly ruminate" the contents and take up their most valuable points into ever increasingly adequate apprehensions. " . . I have never written for the public at large, and I am most anxious that nothing I ever write should be pushed. Let these poor things go down and take root and produce fruit, if and where and when the God who is so kind to the birds and the plants cares to bless them to this degree."[74]

In order to elucidate von Hugel's interpretation of Christian Mysticism it will be advantageous to draw upon all of his major writings and many of his minor articles. His MYSTICAL ELEMENT, of course, comprises the chief and most systematic course. Nevertheless it is in his ESSAYS AND ADDRESSES that the implications are most carefully worked out. It is THE REALITY OF GOD which most clearly defines epistemological and ontological considerations. The outworking of his philosophy, which often gives the clue to its theoretic formulation, can be best seen in his LETTERS. Therefore, no division of his writings can be neglected in an examination of this important sphere of his life and thought.

73. MER I, p. xxxii
74. SL, p. 363

V. Friend and Counselor

Just five years before his death von Hugel wrote to his niece concerning his recent trip to Oxford: "I was there three days. I had much the biggest audience I have ever had -- till this I had 250 at most, this must have been some eight or nine hundred."[75] This remark is an indication of the fact that von Hugel exerted his tremendous influence largely through other channels than that of public addresses. The impact of his writings has already been observed. It remains to note the other avenue of his unique usefulness -- that of personal friend and spiritual counselor.

Those who knew him were always far more impressed by his love for people than his love for ideas. His description of the supernatural life which shone through the quaint characters -- "the horse bus drivers, in a northern suburb of London"[76] -- reveals his deep interest in men of far different interests than his own. The way the children would constantly run to him in the park to enquire the time of day is an indication of the response he aroused. His best work was produced through his efforts to "help souls" in all stations and stages of life. Evelyn Underhill, whose life was deeply influenced by von Hugel, wrote: "It is this power of holding, and practising together (in all their fullness and variety), the pastoral and the philosophic sides of the spiritual life, which made him, I believe without exception, the most influential religious

75. LN, p. 90
76. E&A I, pp. 208, 209

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75. LM, p. 90
76. ERA I, pp. 208, 209

personality of our time."[77]

His methods as a "director of souls" were largely developed by means of trial and error. Therefore it is not surprising to find some of his most valuable traits of later years growing out of experiences of relative failure in the earlier stage. His later ability to "help without forcing" is a case in point. His letter describing the difficult lesson learned by W. G. Ward has an autobiographical background.

> When this eager, one-sided, great, unintentionally unjust, soul was dying, he told his second son that, looking back, he now saw that the main error and mischievousness of his life consisted in his having ever more or less assumed that all souls were of the pattern of W. G. Ward's, that, whenever God's grace really worked upon a real good will, it would use the same means, it would result in the same kind and degree of, not only spirituality, but theology as his own. And that now, face to face with death, he saw how endlessly manifold were souls as made by God, and how various were the degrees and kinds of light and aid given by Him. Now I have felt called upon by my conscience, and I think, my increasing knowledge of souls, to keep careful watch upon myself not to fall into a mistake analogous to that of W. G. Ward's.[78]

Von Hugel had learned this through his experience with his own daughter, Gertrude. At the time when she was passing through a crisis of religious faith and seeking help from her father, he seems to have so shared with her his own learning, feelings and perplexities regarding the immediate future of the Church that it helped to occasion a near breakdown. It was Father Tyrrell who so skillfully helped both father and daughter in this crisis. It has often been suggested that once having learned this lesson from his

77. Underhill, E., MIXED PASTURE, pp. 229, 230
78. F. v. H. to Miss Fogelklou, Jan. 11, 1911. Quoted in Bedoyere, op. cit., pp. 253, 254

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friend, von Hugel proceeded to thank him by leading him up the same treacherous path.

But, difficult as this lesson was to learn, it was learned; and his later experience points to this quality of "freedom from forcing" as one of his major assets in counseling procedures. His relationship to his niece, Mrs. Gwendolen Greene, is most fully seen in his letters and reveals him at his best. To her he said: "No -- not to be a spectacled blue-stocking, but to be a deeply spiritual woman. I want to feed your mind and soul; to make you a sober, persevering, balanced, genial, historical Christian .. I want to teach you through history. History is an enlargement of personal experience . . . . How poor and thin a thing is all purely personal religion! Is there any such thing as a purely original thinker? You must get a larger experience -- you gain it by a study of history; the individualistic basis simply doesn't work."[79] During the following years he directed her in the study of religious and secular classical literature, Church history, and comparative religion. His letters and visits not only rehabilitated a person in a time of crisis, but developed just such a "balanced, genial Christian."

Throughout his life it was his happy privilege to be in a counseling relationship to young people. One of the most gratifying of these experiences was his contact with Juliet Mansel, the "J. M. (a Girl at School)" of the SELECTED LETTERS. He also served as religious instructor for a ten-year-old French boy, Henri Garceau, who lived in

79. LN, pp. xii, xiv

his neighborhood. He largely paid for the boy's schooling until his own financial position made this impossible. When Henri was eighteen the Baron sold his own gold watch-chain in order to buy him a watch as a souvenir of those "happy hours" together. These are typical of relationships he sustained with many young people.

Von Hugel's personal influence was also extended through the two intellectual societies to which he belonged; The Synthetic Society and the London Society for the Study of Religion, the latter which he founded. His papers and discussions were always highlights of these meetings and his intimate relationship to many of the members was nothing less than formative. Throughthis means and the introduction of his many friends to each other, it is probably true, as Maude Petre says, that von Hugel did more than any man in his generation to bring together the profoundest religious thinkers of the age. His most intimate friendships included Alfred Loisy, Maurice Blondel, L. Laberthonniere, Henri Bremond, Romolo Murri, A. Fogazzaro and George Tyrrell in connection with the Modernist movement; in Germany, Ernst Troeltsch, Rudolf Eucken, H. J. Holtzman, and F. Heiler; in Sweden, Archbishop Soderblom; in England, Clement Webb, A. E. Taylor, Canon Lilley, Claude Montefiore, Percy Gardner, Evelyn Underhill and Norman Kemp Smith. Among these his influence upon their philosophical interpretations is readily acknowledged by Tyrrell, Webb, Taylor, Underhill and Kemp Smith.

It was Archbishop Soderblom who summarized this peculiar genius of von Hugel in a "thank you" note to the Baron:

> The secret is the sincere kindheartedness which your person gives out, the personal interest for man as man, whether he is Pope of cabman, English or German, professor or sister of Charity. And I would like to say that this very living, absolute personal interest, not in order to convert or to influence but only simply to grasp and love the human, the divine in each man and therefore also to find an individual, who might be uninteresting to common eyes, to find him worthy of attention and interest.[80]

This phase of von Hugel's interests and ministry is also important for an understanding of his interpretation of Christian Mysticism. His mystical "tastes" place him much closer to the tradition of English mystics, both before and after the Reformation, than to the more metaphysical German school. A comparison between von Hugel and William Law reveals important differences, but these do not obscure striking similarities. Von Hugel is also temperamentally closely related to the great French religious renaissance of the seventeenth century which was marked by the appearance of massive religious thinkers who were, at the same time, skilled directors of souls. Douglas Steere, at the conclusion of his examination of von Hugel's "Critical Realist Philosophy," observes that his treatment of major problems is invariably practical rather than theoretical.[81] Whether the term "practical mystic," in the disparaging sense, may be justly leveled at von Hugel remains to be seen. Nevertheless the existential situation which called forth his interpretation must not be lost from view. "His philosophy was the result of a process of exploration

80. Soderblom to F. v. H. Feb. 28, 1921, quoted in Bedoyere op. cit., p. 323
81. Steere, D., "Critical Realism in the Religious Philosophy of Baron Friedrich Von Hugel," pp. 307, 308

of all that he found to be involved in his own essentially religious faith and his prayer to God. As such it was very much of a personal adventure which possessed a universal and surprisingly wide significance because of its Catholicity and the unusual quality of his mind."[82]

VI. Factors Especially Qualifying Von Hugel As An Interpreter of Christian Mysticism

While there are a myriad of writers on the subject of Mysticism, the life of von Hugel reveals a unique convergence of factors which especially qualify him to interpret this subject. The freshness of his approach and the abiding quality of his conclusions are largely to be understood in the light of this harmony of characteristics seldom united to such a degree in one individual. These factors will be briefly noted.

1. Ecclesiastical Factor

In the midst of the most soul-rending days of the Modernist controversy, von Hugel would speak of himself as "a Catholic, one who would be a proudly devoted and grateful son of the Roman Church."[83] Catholicism, for him, was the very antithesis of the confines of sectarianism. He, therefore, gloried in his organic relation to the "home" of the great Western tradition of Christian Mysticism. It was from the perspective of this "all-embracing and many-sided" Catholicism that he analyzed the place of the mystical element in Church history and Christian experience.

82. Bedoyere, op. cit., p. 280
83. MER I, p. xxv

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Douglas Steere has suggested that von Hugel had little interest in the mysticism which flowered on Protestant soil.[84] Still, he does reveal an intimate knowledge of Jacob Boehme, George Fox, and William Law, as well as an acquaintance with many minor mystical figures. While von Hugel would quickly acknowledge the necessity of selectivity in his study of the vast literature of Mysticism, he constantly reflects the broadest base of sympathies and interests and a truly Catholic perspective, in the most non-sectarian sense.

It is also significant that von Hugel was labelled, not without reason, a "Liberal" Catholic. His daring "openness;" his passion to view any problem from the other's point of view; his willingness to acknowledge the Light of God in the most primitive religion or the most secular conditions; his stringent self-criticism and the criticism of the Church to which he belonged; all of this, added to his dutiful practice of Roman Catholicism gave him an unusual position for the prosecution of the task to which he set himself.

2. Intellectual Factor

Not only was von Hugel related to the mystic tradition through his ecclesiastical heritage; he made the knowledge of this tradition his own through intellectual acquirement. His MYSTICAL ELEMENT is recognized as more than another treatise on mysticism. It is seen as a veritable "Encyclopedia in the field of Christian Mysticism." But this, in itself,

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does not constitute the intellectual factor. Rather, it consisted of the way he was to set his examination of mysticism in the context of his vast learning in the fields of Classical, Medieval and Modern philosophy and theology. He possessed both the required background and the critical acumen necessary for the undertaking.

The range of his interests also contributed to the balance he brought to his work. Like many of his contemporaries he engaged in the refutation of Hegel and his successors, especially Feuerbach. Pantheism he saw as the arch-enemy of valid religion. His stress was on the Prevenience of God set in the framework of a Critical Realist philosophy. At the same time he issued numerous warnings concerning the dangerous, if understandable, excesses of Kierkegaard's radical discontinuity. He had read his works thoroughly when the Dane was still comparatively unknown to English readers. His effort to find his way between these extremes sets the stage for much of his analysis of mysticism. It also suggests an added reason for the relevance of his work for a generation which has just discovered Kierkegaard.

3. Temperamental Factor

For von Hugel, religion at its deepest consisted of "Adoration;" the distinctive religious act was, as such, an unconditional surrender to the Prevenient God. This, for him, was no abstract theory but the very essence of his life of devotion, whether expressed in his nearby church or in his study. He was the living embodiment of what he so often called the "creaturely spirit." This creatureliness was not a sense of littleness amidst a huge World Machine,

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or World Soul, or World Process, but a sense of weakness and poverty as measured by perfect Spirit -- of the Spirit which is not ourself, yet sufficiently like us to humble us while it sustains us. He realized both how difficult and important it was for those with philosophic interests to possess such a spirit.[85]

It is also important in this study that he brought to the subject matter a "Both-And," not an "Either-Or" temperament. In reviewing J. F. Heiler's book DAS GEBET, von Hugel said characteristically: "Indeed the Professor loves the aut-aut; whilst I believe real life mostly demands the et-et."[86] While he would be the first to recognize the need for the prophetic "Either-Or" he also believed there was an equally necessary, if less spectacular, role for the Christian philosopher, whose sober task it was to assess all the factors in a given situation. As such, he was as anxious to treat the real, if limited and secondary, religious movement from man to God, as well as the primary movement from God to man. "For myself I must have both movements: the palace of my soul must have somehow two lifts -- a lift which is always going up from below and a lift which is always going down from above. I must both be seeking and be having."[87]

These three factors give some justification for the selection of von Hugel's work in this field as a topic for examination and consideration. They do not, in themselves, indicate the reason for the writer's attraction to him.

85. E&A I, pp. 264, 265
86. "International Review of Missions," April, 1921, p. 267
87. F. v. H. quoted in Bedoyere, op. cit., pp. 326, 327

This involves what might be called the Personal Factor. R. Newton Flew, in acknowledging his great debt to his father, "who led his son to Christ," and Friedrich von Hugel, "whose massive writings and prophetic insight will continue to point forward to a richer Catholicism of the future," tells of the one time these two men met. "The two men met only once, but immediately they understood one another."[88] In some analogous sense this writer has responded to the help found in the writings of von Hugel. The selection of his interpretation of Christian Mysticism cannot be divorced from this factor of personal help.

88. Flew, R. N., THE IDEA OF PERFECTION, p. ix

CHAPTER TWO

THE ANALYSIS OF THE MYSTICAL ELEMENT IN RELATION TO THE TOTALITY OF THE RELIGIOUS LIFE

I. The Three Elements Distinguished

II. Institutional Religion and Mysticism

III. The Scientific Spirit and Mysticism

IV. Inclusive and Exclusive Mysticism

V. Psycho-Physical and Temperamental Relations to Mysticism

VI. Special Weaknesses and Strengths of Mysticism

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Many reviewers of THE MYSTICAL ELEMENT OF RELIGION were so impressed with the two introductory chapters that it was strongly suggested that these be published independently. While von Hugel would never consent to this, it was an indication of the high esteem with which these chapters, analyzing the unity and diversity of Western Civilation and the religious life, were held. William Temple's evaluation of the importance of von Hugel's distinction between the "three elements" has already been noted; his reaction represented a large consensus.

In Chapter One von Hugel analyzes the component parts of Western Civilization in a way which gives the clue to his subsequent analysis and all-embracing approach to the religious life. He finds three chief forces intermingled and continually needing integrating. The first is Hellenism which stands for harmonization and represents the thirst for richness incorporated in a unified whole. The second is Christianity which stands for spiritual experience and brings its unique revelation of personality and depth. Finally he analyzes Science which consists of the conception and apprehension of brute fact and iron law. This, he believes, involves the acceptance of a "preliminary" mechanism. These are the very forces which "are still

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variously operative in each of us, but which find their harmonious interaction in but few men, their full theoretical systematization in none."[1] None of these forces can be ignored in either the cultural or personal life of man. " . . . . neither can the religious life suppress or do without the philosophical and the scientific, nor can either of these other two lives suppress or permanently do without its fellow or without religion."[2]

A similar process is seen at work in the religious life. Religion could never be true if it turned out to be simple, in the sense of being "monotone," a mere oneness or whole without parts. On the other hand, religion could never be persuasive or fully operative if it consisted only of multiplicity or parts without a whole. In its fullness, then, it consists of real unity including real diversity. These parts or "elements," which it is the task of life to effectively unify, are the Historical-Institutional, the Critical-Philosophical, and the Ethical-Mystical. ". . . . these constituents will but hinder or supplant each other, in proportion as they are not somehow each recognized in their proper place and rank, and are not each allowed and required to supplement and to stimulate the other."[3]

Von Hugel's first step in analysis is to trace the three elements as they successively appear in the child, youth and adult man. Although he will later strongly insist that all elements are operative, some in perhaps a minute

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2. Ibid. p. 49
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degree, in each stage of life's experience, the preliminary, if artificial, concentration on the most obvious element will help to distinguish each more clearly. In childhood, religion is apprehended largely through sense and memory. To the infant senses there was presented some external religious symbol, place, picture, cross, book or movement of hands or body. These became associated with some person -- nurse, mother, teacher or minister. The appeal would first come through the senses to the imaginative faculty and then to the memory of that appeal. In its most simple form it would represent the beginning of the element characterized by the external, authoritative, historical, traditional and institutional function of religion. "The external, sensible, readily picturable facts and the picturing functions of religion correspond to and feed this side, as readily as does the mother's milk correspond to and feed that same mother's infant. Religion is here, above all, a Fact and Thing."[4]

The youth's mode of approaching religion is characterized by question and argument. One begins to feel that I hold this and you hold that. Reasons must be given for that which was previously held without criticism. "The time of trustful questioning, but still of questioning, first others, then oneself, has come."[5] Facts must be related and bound to other facts. Empirical investigation assumes new importance. Religion has now become systematic, scientific and philosophical.

The mature man, von Hugel holds, finds in intuition,

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feeling and volitional decision his special approach to faith. This corresponds to the important, and less easily defined, Ethical-Mystical element. Even as in physiology and psychology where action is found to begin with sense-impression, to move through a process of reflection, and to end in a discharge of will and action, so there must be a "final" stage in the religious life. "For man is necessarily a creature of action, even more than of sensation and of reflection."[6] This is the experimental phase of the religious life. "Here religion is rather felt than seen or reasoned about, is loved and lived rather than analyzed, is action and power, rather than either external fact or intellectual verification."[7]

If the objection is raised that he does not as "clearly" distinguish the third as the two prior elements, von Hugel would agree that this was impossible in the very nature of the case. He believed the passion for geometric and scientific clarity to be ruinous in the more complex areas of life. He declared with passion that "to require clearness in proportion to the concreteness, to the depth of reality, of the subject-matter is an impossible position -- I mean a thoroughly unreasonable, a self-contradictory habit of mind."[8] The higher the plane of life the greater complexity must be expected. And, while he would insist on the equal necessity and validity of each element, there was a real sense in which the mystical element came <u>after</u> the other two and was more rich and complex.

6. Ibid. p. 52
7. Ibid. p. 53
8. E&A I, p. 100

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In all of von Hugel's writings there will hardly be found a more compact and penetrating analysis of one phase of "the struggle of the soul" than in his brief description of "The Two Crises," when it adds speculation to institutionalism and mysticism to both.[9] This further distinquishes the elements in their interaction. The transition from naive, uncritical traditional-institutional religion to "the right and normal type of a young man's religion" is described as a perilous necessity. The temptations arise to cling tenaciously to the authoritative and external in a way which contracts the soul, makes religion a thing alongside of other things, and culminates in superstition; or, to let the intellectual supplant the institutional in a way which spells superficiality and leads only to rationalism and indifference. But, once this crisis is successfully past, the second looms even more formidable. "For the two other forces will, even if single, still more if combined, tend to resist this third force's full share of influence to the uttermost." To the institutional element this mystical drive will appear as violently revolutionary, in the most disruptive sense. To the critical intellect it will seem to be mere subjectivity and sentimentality. On the other hand, the mystical element, when improperly harmonized, will tend to dispense with the institutional as an oppressive ball-and-chain. It may tend to view the critical faculty as useless and impious hair-splitting. If it would succeed "a shifting subjectivity, and all but incurable tyranny of mood and

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fancy, will result, -- fanaticism is in full sight." But once again, this crisis is as necessary to the development of the spiritual life as is the former, and it is as perilous.

The distinctions and interrelations of the three elements are further defined in von Hugel's examination of the distribution of these elements among mankind and human history.[10] This includes various ages, sexes, professions and races. It furnishes a suggestive classification of the great religions and movements in their histories. It is a clue to the understanding of tensions and growth in the Christian Church. It illuminates differences in denominations and orders and aids in understanding the worth and appeal of such diverse groups.

It is necessary to insist, as von Hugel did, that these elements never exist in abstraction as they might appear in rational analysis. Although the exercise of one element may be predominate at one stage of life, for example, each element is actually present. Thus, "there never exists a mere apprehension of something external and sensible, without any interior elaboration, any interpretation by the head and heart."[11] The stimulation of sense, imagination, and memory is more obvious in early years but it is not absent in later years. " . . . . Religion is at all times more or less both traditional and individual; both external and internal; both institutional, rational, and volitional." Religion, when vital,

10. Ibid. pp. 58-65
11. Ibid. p. 53

fancy, will result, -- fanaticism is in full sight." But once again, this crisis is as necessary to the development of the spiritual life as is the former, and is as perilous.

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It is necessary to insist, as von Hugel did, that these elements never exist in abstraction as they might appear in rational analysis. Although the excesses of one element may be predominate at one stage of life, for example, each element is actually present. Thus, "there never exists a mere apprehension of something external and sensible, without any interior elaboration, any interpretation by the head and heart."[11] The stimulation of sense, imagination, and memory is more obvious in early years but it is not absent in later years. " . . . Religion is at all times more or less both traditional and individual; both external and internal; both institutional, rational, and volitional." Religion, when vital,

10. Ibid. pp. 38-63
11. Ibid. p. 53

consists of this tri-polar relationship whereby the elements are held in "fruitful tension." "And everything else being equal, my faith will be at its richest and deepest and strongest, in so far as all these three motives are most fully and characteristically operative within me, at one and the same time, and towards one and the same ultimate result and end."[12]

From this perspective it is possible to see how von Hugel will construe the mystical life. Prior to his distinction between Inclusive and Exclusive Mysticism, it can be seen that Mysticism, in the largest sense, is religion "in which one necessary element of all balanced religious life is at the fullest expansion compatible with a still sufficient amount and healthiness of the other necessary elements of such a life."[13] It is that religious life which includes a deep sense of "Presence"[14] which is essentially an apprehension, admiration, and love of the infinite depths and riches of Reality.[15] But this is an "element," even if the most highly developed, in the complex totality.

> Hence, not the absence of the Mystical element, but the presence both of it and of the other constituents of religion, will turn out to be the safeguard of our deepest life and of its sanity, a sanity which demands a balanced fullness of the soul's three fundamental pairs of activities: sensible perception and picturing memory; reflection, speculative and analytic; and emotion and volition, all issuing in interior and exterior acts, and these latter, again, providing so much fresh material and occasions for renewed action and for a growing unification in an increasing variety on and on.[16]

12. Ibid. p. 54
13. MER II, p. 333
14. E&A I, p. 131
15. MER II, p. 319
16. Ibid. p. 60

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The reader who uses the two introductory chapters of THE MYSTICAL ELEMENT as a portal to von Hugel's religious philosophy can hardly escape the impression that the Baron must be given to an excessively over-simplified schematization. Further reading, however, would convincingly prove that this was never the Baron's intention. He saw his task as that of describing the "deepest forces of the spiritual life," not seeking to make Reality conform to his preconceptions. He was forever opposed to the subtle temptation "to tidy up reality of all kinds into what one thinks reality, as God's will or permission, ought actually to be."[17] Evelyn Underhill is surely correct in seeing this delineation of the three elements as "really no more than a particular application of his governing intuition: that of the many-levelled richness and complexity of life, the organic character of human personality, and the dangerous silliness of simplification when applied to the mysterious scene which confronts our human consciousness, or the more mysterious facts of our inner life."[18]

There have been numerous attempts to improve upon von Hugel's classification. Albert A. Cock believed that the adorational and aesthetic factors of religion could only be subsumed under the three elements with "great difficulty."[19] Dom Cuthbert Butler adds a fourth, "the element of service of others."[20] James B. Pratt suggests

17. E&A I, p. 288
18. Underhill, E., MIXED PASTURE, p. 228 f.
19. SPECULUM RELIGIONIS, Oxford (Clarendon Press), 1929. Chapter IX, "Friedrich von Hugel and His Work, pp. 209, 210
20. WESTERN MYSTICISM, p. 292

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as a fourth element "the practical or moral which lays the emphasis upon the thing that must be done rather than upon the thing that must be believed or felt."[21] With his passion for "fullness" rather than simplification it is not surprising to see von Hugel recommend the books of Butler and Pratt without being absorbed in criticism of classification.[22]

Von Hugel anticipated the criticism that such an analysis was at bottom Pelagian. He knew it would appear as a clever bit of human juggling seeking consciously to balance part against part. But he was ready to refer every physical and spiritual act to the prevenient, accompanying and subsequent power and help of God. Only this Divine priority must not obliterate the human responsibility in the act. Drawing upon the doctrine of Grace and Free Will as expounded by St. Bernard and St. Thomas, von Hugel wrote:

> . . . . God's grace acts in and through the medium of her acts (the soul's), inasmuch as these are good: so that the very same action which, seen as it were from without, is the effect of our own volition, is, seen as it were from within, the effect of God's grace. The more costly is our act of love or of sacrifice, the more ethical and spiritual, the more truly it is our own deepest self-expression, so much the more, at the same time, is this action a thing received as well as given, and that we have it to give, and that we can and do give it, is itself a pure gift of God . . . . man will never be so fully active, so truly and intensely himself, as when he is most possessed by God.[23]

II. Institutional Religion and Mysticism

The disastrous tendency of one element, or a combina-

21. THE RELIGIOUS CONSCIOUSNESS, p. 14
22. See Preface to second edition of MER
23. MER I, p. 80

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The subject of Institutional Religion was kept in the forefront of von Hugel's work due to both interior disposition and external circumstances. The Times Literary Supplement described him as "the most persuasive, because the most widely informed, the most restrained, and the most candid champion of institutional religion that our age has seen." Among his most helpful contributions in this field are his analysis of the modern "substitutes" for Institutional Religion;[24] the peculiar needs of "scientific churchmen;"[25] the tension of "Official Authority and Living Religion;"[26] the relationship of Catholicism and Protestantism in Institutional Religion;[27] and the relationship of Liberal Movements to Institutional Religion.[28] Here, however, we are specifically concerned with his treatment of Institutional Religion in "fruitful tension" with the mystical element. He has given us the clue to their interaction in his statement: "At bottom, the difference, between the Mystic as such and the religionist of a more historical or sacramental type, lies as much in the interesting non-recognition of the mediations always actually

24. E&A I, p. 254 f.
25. Ibid. p. 266 f.
26. E&A II, p. 1 f.
27. E&A I, pp. 222 f, 242; E&A II, p. 243 f.
28. E&A II, p. 89 f.

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24. EHA I, p. 234 f.
25. Ibid., p. 266 f.
26. EHA II, p. 1 f.
27. EHA I, pp. 222 f., 242; EHA II, p. 249 f.
28. EHA II, p. 89 f.

at work also in the Mystic, yet always thus ignored or minimised by him, as in the actual preponderance, in the same Mystic, of any directly intuitive element."[29]

Whereas in THE MYSTICAL ELEMENT (1908) von Hugel's major emphasis was upon the equality of the three elements with a tendency to magnify the mystical element, in later writings he tends to place more stress on Troeltsch's distinction of mysticism coming historically and experientially second, never first, as compared with historical and institutional religion.[30] But he is anxious to insist that this fact should not lead to the interpretation that mysticism is a "mere addition or spurious substitute, or that, at least, it does not really reach a deeper level or constituent of the facts so interpreted."[31] It is not degrading then for mysticism to find its true "home" in Institutional Religion. Artistic and musical geniuses such as Raphael and Beethoven do not render obsolete the presence of academies and schools as superfluous, but really point to the poverty of wild men and isolated workers who attempt to dispense with the social and traditional. So in religion "we shall find the richest and deepest figures to proceed from out of tradition, prophet having prophet behind him and saint having saint."[32] The frequent non-recognition of historical-institutional mediation overlooks the important fact that "there could be no Quakers, no Mystics, amongst men, were all men Quakers and Mystics."[33]

29. E&A I, pp. 131, 132
30. RG, p. 89 (1925), LN, p. 69 (1919), E&A I, p. 131 (1919)
31. RG, p. 89
32. RG, p. 144, also E&A I, pp. 259, 260
33. E&A I, p. 131

It is in the very experience of these Quakers, George Fox in particular, that von Hugel sees the finest example of the necessary interdependence of the mystical and the institutional elements. He believes he understands the legitimate drive of Quakers because he genuinely loves them.[34]

The desire of Fox to learn directly and exclusively from Christ and not from "the vain tradition of men," alone is both understandable and in many ways commendable. But his confident insistence that his openings were "without the help of man" or scripture only reveals his real dependence on the tradition he seeks to ignore. "Fox and his friends are steeped in images and convictions that have grown up amongst, that have been handed down by, concrete historical men, and concrete, historical institutions and cultural acts. The "Universal Reason," "the Word," "the inner light," "the Universal Brotherhood," "The Bread of Life," are all based upon some two thousand years of Jewish and Christian Church experience, articulated in part by centuries of Greek philosophical thought."[35] Their greatest dependence would appear to be upon the essentially "sense-spirit," sacramental Fourth Gospel.[36]

Fox is vehement in his antipathy to all learning and syllogistic reasoning in ministerial training. The study of Hebrew, Greek and Latin is but a backsliding to Babel. Nevertheless his Journal frequently notes that he took his Bible to some remote spot and searched out its contents

34. E&A II, pp. 61, 68, 69, 73, 74, 75
35. E&A I, p. 231
36. E&A I, p. 92; E&A II, p. 70

until night came on. He seemed oblivious to his debt to grammarians, translators and exegetes.[37] In a similar vein he pours out scorn upon "letter" worshippers of the "dead" Scripture. The fact that this and other traditional symbols were instruments of spiritual quickening in the past, and would be in the future, even as they were helping to produce the revival with which his name was associated, did not seem to enter his mind.

In the violent "Either-Or" passion for the Absolute, Fox finds no place for relative and graduated distinctions. The Jesuit is immediately condemned for "utterly denying" that he spoke with the same fullness of the Holy Ghost as the first apostles.[38] " . . . . as though no artist is more than an impostor who does not possess, and does not know and does not avow that he possesses, the very same amount and kind of artistic genius as that which produced the Parthenon Sculptures of Pheidias or the Madonna di San Sisto of Raphael."[39] It is assumed that the intensity of devotion can be maintained at a fever pitch with no need of social and institutional support for times of "dryness." To von Hugel, this is a hopelessly inadequate expectation. Rather, the spiritual life knows fluctuations; it has its high "moments" and its "parched places," individually or collectively. It is "during the periods of obscurity that the soul lives in a very true sense in the faith of its fellows until fresh light makes it in its turn support the others. No man is sufficient to himself, not in shoemaking,

37. E&A II, pp. 70, 73
38. E&A II, p. 71
39. Ibid. p. 76

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37. XXA II, pp. 70, 73
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not in printing, not in advertising; it is only in the deepest of all things, in religion, that we hear men talk and write, more often than is pleasant, as though it were sufficient for them to cut themselves off from all others to think and to write good sense."[40]

This "flat" view of inspiration is closely related to the failure of Fox to appreciate and make place for the infinite variety of souls which of necessity composes the Institution, the Church. His view could only lead to an impoverishing simplification; a small club of similarly tempered mystical spirits. Institutional Religion, however, makes for richness by its large incorporation of diverse elements and its positive encouragement of those whose development is known to be one-sided.

> Hence, here as elsewhere, but more than anywhere, our ideal standard will be the greatest possible development of, and inter-stimulation between, each and all of the religious elements, with the greatest possible unity in the resulting organism. And yet, -- in view of the very greatness of the result aimed at, and of the fact that its ever approximate attainment can, even for any one age of the world, be reasonably expected only from the co-operation of the differently endowed and attracted races and nations, social and moral grades, sexes, ages and individuals that make up mankind, -- we shall not only be very tolerant of, we shall positively encourage, largely one-sided developments, provided that each keeps some touch with the elements which itself knows not how to develop in abundance, and that it considers its own self, and works out its own special gift and attrait, as but one out of many variously gifted and apportioned fellow-servants in the Kingdom, -- as only one of the countless, mutually complementary, individually manifold greatness, of the rich unity of spiritual humanity as willed by God, and of God Himself.[41]

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40. RG, p. 144
41. MER II, p. 116

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life from its sense-traditional-historical trammels is nowhere more apparent than in his Christology, or lack of it. Christ, for Fox, enlightens all men so entirely to the same degree, in the same manner before as after His earthly life, and without as with personal knowledge of Him during His earthly career, that, finally, only an omnipresent illumination, independent of all time and place, history, tradition or institution, is proclaimed. History abundantly confirms the simple transition from this type of "religious mysticism" to rationalism or the cold secularism of Ben Franklin which identifies this "indwelling Christ" with a universal rational endowment of man.[42]

Von Hugel also points to the inability of the Society of Friends (in this respect like the Unitarian body) to keep pace with the growth of population. This is to be seen in spite of its passion to free the religious life from all that "offends" and divides -- formal creeds and Confessions -- and its insistence upon the universal light of Christ and love of God towards men, and upon man's supreme duty of a similar love towards God and man. But mysticism which has been checked and purified within the institution is capable of continuation and growth.[43]

Underlying this non-recognition of institutional mediation, von Hugel discerns an inadequate psychology, hence epistemology, and an inadequate conception of history. Instead of the Quaker conception of pure spirit in contact

42. E&A II, p. 76
43. Ibid. pp. 84, 85. Von Hugel compares this to the standstill in the Brahma Samaj movement.

with Pure Spirit von Hugel insists that as a matter of simple fact we nowhere find, as a constituent of our own human life and nature pure spirit, or pure body, or a purely spiritual or a purely bodily act. "But everywhere we only find spirit awakened by, and in its turn awakening, checking, impelling, spiritualising body; and body furnishing such awakening, material, friction, medium of expression and of appeal, yet also abstraction and deflection, to spirit."[44] Our knowledge of our own "self" is not a pure self-knowledge. We do not begin with a knowledge of our individual selves and then, by analyzing or theorizing this knowledge, attain a knowledge of other things. Rather, from the first, we possess a knowledge of other things which in turn awakens simultaneously within us a sense of what is not contingent, temporal or spatial. So, our sense of the Infinite God springs up in contrast with, hence on occasion of, our consciousness of the finite. The failure to understand the relation of sense and Spirit, finite and infinite, also expresses itself in Fox's inability to grasp the significance of the law of apperception. This means he is blind to the way one's most vivid intuition and exalted inspiration largely depend upon, and are impossible without previous insight, memory and tradition. It is in these psychological and epistemological considerations that von Hugel sees the simplest and deepest of all the reasons for historical and institutional religion.[45]

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44. E&A II, p. 62
45. E&A II, pp. 62 f, 75 f; RG, p. 140

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and spirit is the question of history with its similar polarity -- "an interdependence, a tension and hostility, a mutual incapacity to do without or to cohabit peacefully, of Past and Present."[46] Even as man cannot apprehend Spirit out of all relation to Body, neither can he apprehend Eternity, the All Present, out of Time and Succession. For both good and evil the Past is there, operatively present, in the Present. Its claims can be utilized but not ignored. It is for this reason that von Hugel sees a wider margin of conflict between Prophets and Professors (Rabbis and Doctors) than between Prophets and Priests.[47] Both Prophets and Professors claim to be teachers; the one by Inspiration and the other by Tradition. To simply assume that in this conflict the Prophets are always right is as superficial as to assume that they are always useless. "Upon close examination, we always discover that, be the abuses or errors on Tradition's side ever so heavy, some Tradition not only remains necessary, but is operating most powerfully, as a positive ingredient and shaping power, within even the most independent-seeming, the most anti-traditional utterances of any Prophet that ever lived."[48]

It remains to discover how von Hugel conceived the relation of this necessary "Institution" to the Roman Catholic Church of which he was a proud son. This represents the question of the relation of the Visible and the Invisible Church. On this question he believed he was in perfect accord with the most ample and, at the same time,

46. E&A II, p. 64
47. Ibid. pp. 66, 67
48. Ibid. p. 67

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most orthodox thought. While he opposed the Quaker "anti-Incarnational" emphasis and Luther's polemical tendency toward the exclusion of all connection between the Visible and Invisible Churches, he likewise deplored the Legalism of the Curialists, the Italian and German Jesuit Canonists, and the simple identification expressed by Cardinal Torquemada. It was Augustine who had charted the course for true Catholics by insisting that there are many human spirits belonging to the body of the Church who do not belong to its soul, and many human spirits belonging to the soul of the Church who do not belong to its body. "The rich vitality of that primitive Christian conviction doubtless depended as truly upon those Christians not making the absolute distinction, insisted upon by Luther, as upon their not making the simple identification, almost fully reached by these Canonist theologians."[49] Thus his thought was typically Roman Catholic in the relation of the Church to the Sects. It must be affirmed, however, that he drew upon the most liberal (in this case he would say "most Catholic") source and he brought to his study of Non-Romanist Church life a most sympathetic and understanding mind.

It is then within the framework of historical, "Institutional Christianity" that the mystical element of religion will find its true home, its greatest stimulation, its safeguard from excess, its most adequate means of expression, and its surest, fruitful continuation.

49. EL, p. 357

III. The Scientific Spirit and Mysticism

Besides its relation to Institutional Religion it is also necessary to examine the special relationship of dependence and stimulation existing between mysticism and the Scientific Spirit. This corresponds to von Hugel's second element, variously described as the intellectual, critical, philosophical, and scientific. While he believes that the main conflict or friction is no longer between Religion and Physical Science but between it and "Historical Science," and that each of these has its special approach and difficulty "they are in so far alike, if taken as a means of purification for the soul bent upon its own deepening, that both require a slow, orderly, disinterested procedure, capable of fruitfulness only by the recurring sacrifice of endless petty self-seekings and obstinate fancies, and this in face of that natural eagerness and absoluteness of mind which strong religious emotions will, unless they too be disciplined and purified, only tend to increase and stereotype."[50] Even as in the case of Institutional Religion von Hugel's method of correlation will be to show the mutual need of science for sincere spirituality and of sincere spirituality for science.

> For I hope to show how only one particular manner of conceiving and of practising those scientific activities and this spiritual life and consolidation allows, indeed requires, the religious passion, -- the noblest and deepest passion given to man, -- to be itself enlisted on the side of that other noble indestructible thing, severe scientific sincerity. This very sincerity would thus not empty or distract, but would, on the contrary, purify and deepen the soul's spirituality: and hence this

50. MER II, p. 383

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30. MAN II, p. 383

> spirituality would continuously turn to that sincerity for help in purifying and deepening the soul. And, surely, until we have somehow attained to some such interaction, the soul must perforce remain timid and weak; for without sincerity everywhere, we cannot possibly develop to their fullest the passion for truth and righteousness even in religion itself."[51]

In anticipating the criticism that his balanced triad made too great a place for this intellectual element -- when it seemed to be present and developed in but few -- von Hugel insisted on the necessity of the widest possible inclusion of functions within this element. Although varying in type and degree in each individual it is to be found in every one. It is found in the attention to <u>things</u> and their mechanism, their necessary laws and requirements. It can be found in miners, laundry-girls and farmers who move in alteration from this concentration on the Thing, with its external, determinist law to recollection, rudimentary contemplation, and the deeply internal requirements of spiritual growth and consolidation; it can be seen in St. Jean Batiste de la Salle, studying the psychology of school-children's minds and adapting his school system to it; it is evidenced in St. Jerome's labors over his manuscripts; and it is operative in the work of St. Anselm and St. Thomas as they construct their dialectic systems.[52] The identical standard is to be applied in the use of this element as in the others; this is not a substitute, but an additional means and material for the moral and spiritual life.

51. MER I, p. xxv
52. MER I, p. 78; MER II, p. 379

Historically, it had been necessary for the rise of Empirical Science, which was von Hugel's chief scientific interest, to develop and justify itself in opposition, and reaction, to that stream of thought which was in a special sense the home of Western Mysticism -- Neo-Platonism. Matter and the Visible were taken as more or less synonymous with Non-Being and Irrationality as a veil or a wall, as a mere accident or positive snare, lying everywhere between man and Reality. Christianity, with its doctrines of the essential goodness of Creation, the Incarnation, and the "Resurrection of the Body" was frequently betrayed into capitulation to Neo-Platonic presuppositions. "Christian Mysticism" appeared as Neo-Platonism in thin Christian clothing. It was inevitable that this world-denying element would cause the pendulum to swing violently in the opposite direction. The arrogance with which religious sanction was given to such other-worldliness could only provide a polemical edge to men's zealous study and discovery of <u>this</u> world. While the tradition of Christian Mysticism is filled with humanitarian endeavor which stands in striking contrast to the "theories" of the mystics, it is, nevertheless, true that the desire for purification by turning away from the particular, by abstraction, and absorption in the general, as leading away from the particularity of the creature to the simplicity of the Creator, virtually eliminated the possibility and need of experimental science.

> Here we should frankly admit that the soul's hunger for the Infinite is, as the great Athenian so deeply realized,

> the very mainspring of Religion; and yet we must maintain that it is precisely this single bound away, instead of the ever-repeated double movement of a coming and a going, which not only helped to suppress, or at least gravely to stunt, the growth of the sciences of external observation and experiment, but (and this is the special point, -- the demonstrable other side of the medal) also, in its degree, prevented religion from attaining to its true depth, by thus cutting off, as far as Plato's conviction prevailed, the very material, stimulation, and in part the instruments, for the soul's outgoing, spiritualizing work, together with this work's profound reflex effect upon the worker, as a unique occasion for the growth and self-detachment of the soul.[53]

The gradual, costing triumph of the scientific method was achieved, in spite of the forces of resistance and is rightly regarded by von Hugel as one of the three "Chief Forces of Western Civilization." Scientific pursuits were perceived by even the shallower thinkers to be fair, rational, and fruitful in themselves. By a few more discerning spirits this was found to be a potent means of purifying, enlarging, and "deprovincializing" man himself.

> The severe discipline of a rigorous study of man's lowly, physical conditions and environment, things hitherto so despised by him, was now at last to purify him of his own childish immediacy of claim. The pettily selfish, shouting Individual was to pass through the broad, still, purgatorial waters of a temporary submergence under the conceptions, as vivid as though they were direct experiences of ruthless Law, of Mechanism, of the Thing; so as to pass out, purified and enlarged, a Person, expressive of the Universal and Objective, of Order and Law.[54]

What position must be taken with reference to this legitimate, if limited, element in Western Civilization and in the individual life of man? If the Institutional and Mystical are both legitimate elements, their frequent com-

53. MER II, p. 368
54. MER I, p. 41

bination as "religion" leads frequently enough to opposition to "science" or the Intellectual element. How are these to be related? Von Hugel discusses prevalent alternatives. It is possible to level all down to Mathematico-Physical science, which means to deny the specific constituents of Spirituality and render the growth of the Person out of the Individual an impossibility. Similarly, it is possible to treat the Thing-level as final which means that the scientist himself tends to become little more than a casual Thing, a soulless Law. In this case Materialism or, at best, a kind of Pantheism becomes one's practice and creed. On the other hand, it is possible to proclaim the Person and its religion as static substances and evade and thwart the Thing-level and method as far as possible. But this, too, will "keep back the all but simply animal Individual from attaining to his full spiritual personality."[55] At its worst it can lead to a childish self-centeredness lacking the purification which a vivid apprehension of the mechanical, deterministic level of experience can provide. " . . . . you will, even if you have acquired certain fragmentary convictions and practices of religion appear strangely less, instead of more, than your adversary, to any one capable of equitably comparing that Agnostic and yourself -- you who, if Faith be right, ought surely to be not less but more of a personality than that non-believing soul."[56] The only adequate harmonization, however, is to take the Spiritual, Personal level as alone ultimate, yet as

55. MER II, p. 384
56. Ibid.

necessarily requiring that the individual pass and repass continually from his individualistic plane and attitude through Thing-and-Fate region if this is to be reached or maintained. The individual becomes transformed into Spirit and Person through the instrumentality of Determinist Law. The subsequent depth of spiritual personality gathers up all that is legitimate in Agnosticism and Pantheism while transcending them.

This view requires science to be taken in two ways: on its own level it is self-sufficing, autonomous;[57] but, in the second and only final sense, it is a part of the whole, a necessary but preliminary function of the whole man. "Crush out, or in any way mutilate or de-autonomize, this part, and all the rest will suffer. Sacrifice the rest to this part, either by starvation or attempted suppression, or by an impatient assimilation of this immense remainder to that smaller and more superficial part, and the whole man suffers again, and much more seriously."[58] This hierarchic integration of levels, representing multiplicity in unity, has already been noticed as one of von Hugel's favorite methods of looking "realistically" and "not too clearly" at the dynamic consciousness of man. This was his method of safeguarding against the besetting sin of oversimplification. Thus, no theoretical harmonization could, or should, relieve the legitimate tension and friction which must always remain in the dynamic interaction of the elements.

57. MER I, pp. 45 f; MER II, pp. 368 f
58. MER I, p. 45

> And yet, let us remember once more, the foreground and preliminary stage to even the sublimest of such lives will never, here below at least, be abidingly transcended, or completely harmonized with the groundwork and ultimate stage, by the human personality. Indeed our whole contention has been that, with every conceivable variation of degree, of kind, and of mutual relation, these two stages, and some sort of friction between them, are necessary, throughout this life, for the full development, the self-discipline, and the adequate consolidation, at the expense of the childish, sophistic, individual, of the true spiritual Personality.[59]

Some of the functions of science in man's spiritual life have already been noticed. It remains to note the cognate concepts most frequently employed by von Hugel to designate this ministry of science. In his early writings he often describes science as the modern means by which to express the "principle of Alternation." Thus, the religious man especially must turn from the One to the Many, from the Abiding to the Contingent, from the Personal to the Determinist Impersonal, from Spiritual to Sensual. The soul can only fully live by this double process: occupation with the concrete and then abstraction from it, and this in alternation. "If it has not the latter it will grow empty and hazy; if it has not the former, it will grow earthy and heavy."[60] The ideal is to plunge into the concrete and return enriched to the abstract, and then returning, purified and simplified, from the abstract to transform and elevate the concrete. This would not be grudgingly accepted as a necessary burden of life but joyfully, if painfully, experienced as a means to spiritual perfection. It would, thus,

59. MER II, p. 386
60. SL, p. 72 (1898)

have its normal and necessary place in the very theory of spirituality. In the day of St. Catherine, when science was largely represented by fantastic anthropocentric conceptions as those of Paracelsus, and scholarship, by such pretentious omniscience as that of Pice della Mirandola, such a use was impossible. Today, however, it represents the finest possibility for such necessary alternation.

In later writings he referred to science's function of Purification most frequently. For the man belonging to Western races and determined to utilize the special circumstances and trials as so many means towards his own spiritualization it will be necessary to keep in living touch with that secondary and preliminary reality, the Thing-world, Physical Science, and Determinist Law. It is by passing and repassing beneath these Caudine Forks that he will be purified and developed in a way completely impossible for one who ignores this area of life, this element of religion. This is the more fruitful corrective for the thirst of St. John of the Cross to lose the soul, its every pettiness and egoistic separateness, in an abstract, universal, quasi-impersonal disposition and reality. In answer to the criticism that his view of the three elements suggested an Epicurean sense of fullness, but not the Christian view of the Cross and Self-Renunciation, von Hugel stressed this purifying function of the intellectual-scientific element.[61] The intellectual element does not begin the soul's life or build up its conditions nor conclude and crown it. In many ways its sphere is the most

61. MER I, pp. 81, 82

limited of the three. But, "both at the beginning, then, and throughout, and even at the end of the soul's life, the intellectual element is necessary, and this above all for the planting fully and finally, in the very depths of the personality, the Cross, the sole means to the soul's true Incoronation."[62] This limited, but necessary, sphere of the critical faculty finds expression in William Temple's treatment of the "synthesis" which is not a mere average struck between the "thesis" and the "antithesis." "It is always a reassertion of the "thesis" with all that has proved valuable in the "antithesis" digested into it."[63] Thus, in the "journey of the soul" the mystical or mature stage (with the qualifications noted in section I of this chapter) has a close kinship with the institutional, naive-childlike stage. But it has passed through a critical-purgatory. The "Religion of Maturity" or mystical religion, at its best, is post-critical, not pre-critical.

A third and somewhat questionable conception for the function of science in the spiritual life was its use as an instrument for Detachment.[64] During the first three generations Christians found in their keen expectation of the proximate second coming of Christ the motive for detachment and other-worldliness which was necessary for their effective struggle in the pagan world. From the time of Augustine's teaching concerning the effects of Original Sin there was a pessimistic turning away from the future and a

62. IBID. p. 82
63. NATURE, MAN AND GOD, pp. 58, 59. See all of Chapter III where his indebtedness to von Hugel is acknowledged.
64. MER II, p. 380 f.

62. IBID. p. 82.

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64. MER II, p. 380 f.

concentration on man's pre-historic beginnings. This had a similar sober, detaching effect on Christians analogous to the earlier expectation of the Parousia. Von Hugel sees these concepts to have lost their poignant detaching power. Still, something is required for the acquisition and preservation of the absolutely essential temper of detachment and other-worldliness. Modern science offers such a channel, he believed. This use of science was never worked out as elaborately or satisfactorily as the two previously mentioned conceptions.

The normal functioning of the intellectual element produces its own peculiar virtues, even as the other elements contribute their own unique class. These can only be developed by the proper exercise of this critical-scientific spirit. Among them are candor, moral courage, intellectual honesty, scrupulous accuracy, chivalrous fairness, endless docility to facts, disinterested collaboration, unconquerable hopefulness and perseverance, manly renunciation of popularity and easy honors, and love of bracing labor and strengthening solitude.[65] Von Hugel frequently writes concerning those who have incarnated these virtues to an unusual degree. It is this which especially attracted him to Charles Darwin, with his disoccupation with the petty self, plodding perseverance for collecting and arranging facts, loving humility which joyfully bent down to the life of creatures lower than man and which made him a model of the empirical method. Another hero was Father Perry, the

65. MER I, p. 79

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Jesuit astronomer, who knowing of his imminent death, followed through with his detailed observations of the movements of the planets from his remote South Pacific station as a service for God and man.[66]

It remains to note the kinds of occupation with "Things" and Science which are possible in the total life of Christian devotion. In accordance with the "Cross Principle" it will be found that "in proportion as their practice within, and in aid of, the spiritual life is difficult, in the same proportion . . . . is this practice purifying."[X] The first kind is that of a hobby whereby man's directly religious acts and daily labors get relieved and alternated. For von Hugel this meant his occupation with Geology. While this could have great value it was not a purificatory force. The second kind of occupation was that of a man whose profession involved a kind of science which had achieved a relatively secure place within official religious doctrines and feelings, i. e. astronomy or Greek archaeology. Here the purification would be in proportion to the loyal thoroughness with which the autonomy of both science, as the foreground, and religion, as the background and ultimate interpreter of life, were maintained and developed. This holds great possibilities for the advance of both science and religion in their mutual dependence. As yet, he feels, it is comparatively rare "because of the considerable cost and the life long practice and training involved in what readily looks like a deliberate complicating

66. E&A I, pp. 142, 143
X MER II, p. 381

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66. MBA I, pp. 142, 143
X MHH II, p. 381

and endangering of things, otherwise, each severally simple and safe."[67] The third and most purifying occupation was that reserved for the few who must work systematically at a science which was still in the process of winning full recognition by official Theology. The best illustrations in his day were Biological Evolution and Biblical Criticism.

> For here there will, as yet, be no possibility of so shunting the scientific activity on to one side, or of limiting it to a carefully pegged-out region, as to let Religion and Science energize as forces of the same kind and same level, the same clearness and same finality; but the Science will here have to be passed through as the surface-level, on the way to Religion as underlying all. What would otherwise readily tend to become, as it were, a mental Geography, would thus here give way to what might be pictured as a spiritual Geology.[68]

IV. Inclusive and Exclusive Mysticism

Having distinguished and analyzed the dynamic interaction of the three elements in the religious life it is now necessary to note von Hugel's rough, but important, classification of Inclusive and Exclusive Mysticism. Eventually, any interpreter of the mystical life must present some criterion to distinguish true and false, valid and invalid, pure, impure and mixed types. This classification represents von Hugel's attempt.

Since the mystical is but one element of the religious life, Mysticism has been provisionally and ideally defined as the most massive and profound development of one type of ultimate religion; a type in which one necessary element of all balanced religious life is at the fullest expansion

67. MER II, p. 382
68. Ibid.

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67. MKH II, p. 382
68. Ibid.

compatible with a still sufficient amount and healthiness of the other necessary elements of such a life. True Mysticism, as compared with spurious substitutes, is that which maintains a healthy interaction of all the powers of the soul and both of its movements of "outgoing to the Infinite" and "occupation with the Finite." This, while allowing for various degrees of emphasis, constitutes Inclusive Mysticism. This alone can satisfy the soul of the mystic which can never be content with an impoverishing contraction; for it essentially aspires to an apprehension, admiration and love of the infinite depths and riches of Reality.

In contrast to this, Exclusive Mysticism attempts to make the mystical element become the all of religion by excluding the necessary friction involved in contact with institutional and intellectual elements, and by anathamatizing one of the two necessary movements of the soul -- the occupation with the multiple and contingent. Exclusive Mysticism represents the "single bound away, instead of the ever-repeated double movement of a coming and a going."[69] While mystic theoretical expression and social practice have frequently been inconsistent, this almost complete despising of the world has been the temptation of all mysticism and the characteristic of Western Mysticism which was predominately indebted to Neo-Platonism. The mystics within the Christian Church tended toward Exclusive Mysticism to the degree in which Neo-Platonism

69. MER II, p. 368

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69. MNK II, p. 368

triumphed over Biblical elements in their religious life and expression. This distinction is, therefore, important in seeking to define a "Christian Mysticism."

This condemnation of the contingent, so characteristic of Exclusive Mysticism, has taken many forms. In disclaiming any distinct faculty of mystical apprehension von Hugel states that "all the errors of the Exclusive Mystic proceed precisely from the contention that Mysticism does constitute such an entirely separate, completely self-supported kind of human experience."[70] It denies its dependence upon its past and present contacts with the contingent, temporal and spatial, and with social facts and elements which condition both its knowing and the expressions of what it has found. The "Illuminations" of George Fox are typical of the mystic exclusion of "sense" from Spirit.

The Exclusive Mystics have frequently been so engrossed in concentration on the movement of the soul to the Infinite that they have virtually ignored the prior movement to the Divine Condecension. When this has been united with confessions of "Union" in which distinctions of individuality have been sloughed off the door has been opened to the various subjectivisms and psychologisms which have plagued the history of Mysticism.

The most obvious expression of Exclusive Mysticism is its devaluation of the social implications of religion.[71] In its haste for the flight of the "alone to the Alone" it

70. Ibid. p. 283
71. Ibid. p. 351 f

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71. Ibid. p. 351 f

looks upon any "man to man" relationship as a threat to its concentration on the Absolute. Here God tends to become a "thing alongside of other things." He is the First of Creatures, placed alongside of man and competing for man's love. The inference is that whatever love creatures win from man by reason of their inherent goodness is taken from Him.

The ascetic tradition has found it difficult to maintain both God's Transcendence and Immanence in the social life of man. According to this, which alone squares with an Incarnational, Sense and Spirit viewpoint, God is placed, not alongside of creatures but behind them, as the light which shines through a crystal and lends it whatever luster it may have. "He is loved here, not apart from, but through and in them. Hence if only the affection be of the right kind as to mode and object, the more the better. The love of Him is the 'form,' the principle of order and harmony; our natural affections are the 'matter' harmonized and set in order; it is the soul, they are the body, of that one Divine Love whose adequate object is God in, and not apart from, His creatures."[72]

Von Hugel believed that the contribution of Ernst Troeltsch to the understanding of social religion and asceticism was unsurpassed. In holding to the necessity of Christianity of a polarity, which was not a circle with one center but an ellipse with two foci, Troeltsch stressed a Dualism which was ever in process of abolition

72. Ibid. p. 353; see also G. Tyrrell's THE FAITH OF THE MILLION, 1901, Vol. II, pp. 49, 50; 52, 53; 55, 56.

by Faith and Action. This polarity was between what he called Religious and Humane Ethics, neither of which can be dispensed without moral damage, yet which cannot be brought completely under a common formula. The special characteristic of modern civilization was seen to reside precisely in a simultaneous insistence upon the Inner-Worldly-Ends, as possessing the nature of ends-in-themselves, and upon the Religious, Super-Worldly-End. At one time it might be especially necessary to give prominence to the Religious Ethic with its abruptly exclusive emphasis on God and the values of the interior life; at another time to the Humane Ethic which is occupied with the molding and transforming of social relations. But neither could be completely absent if the Christian perspective were to be retained. Whereas Tyrrell tended toward an Immanentism, Troeltsch, in his early writings, was careful to guard the necessary stress on Transcendence.

> And yet this original germ of the whole vast growth and movement ever remains an intensely, abruptly Transcendent Ethic, and can never simply pass over into a purely Immanental Ethic. The Gospel ever remains, with all possible clearness and keenness, a Promise of Redemption, leading us, away from the world, from nature and from sin, from earthly sorrow and earthly error, on and on to God; and which cannot allow the last word to be spoken in this life. Great as are its incentives to Reconciliation, it is never entirely resolvable into them. And the importance of that classical beginning ever consists in continuously calling back the human heart, away from all culture and Immanence, to that which lies above both.[73]

While it is characteristic of false or Exclusive

73. Troeltsch, E., "Was heisst Wesen des Christenthums?" in Christliche Welt, 1903, I, 583, 584. See MER II, p. 360

Mysticism to deny the legitimacy of this social reference, and Inclusive Mysticism to incorporate it, nevertheless the drive of even the best Mysticism is toward the Individualistic -- whereby the supreme realities are God and the individual soul. This, for von Hugel, is one of the proofs that "mysticism is but one of the elements of religion, -- for religion requires both the social and the individual, the corporate and the lonely movement and life."[74] This also proves the necessity of the Church being able to unite in one organism various types of specialists and "mixed souls." There is no danger in specialization or subdivision of labor as long as one sees his work as such a subdivision and seeks to retain and cultivate some sense of, and respect for, the other human activities which do not constitute his speciality.

> Thus no system of religion can be complete and deeply fruitful which does not embrace, (in every possible kind of healthy development, proportion and combination) the several souls and the several types of souls who, between them, will afford a maximum of clear apprehension and precise reasoning, and of dim experience and intuitive reason; of particular attention to the Contingent (Historical Events and Persons, and Institutional Acts and Means) and of General Recollection and Contemplation and Hungering after the Infinite; and of reproductive Admiration and Loving Intellection, and of quasi-creative, truly productive Action upon and within Nature and other souls, attaining, by such Action, most nearly to the supreme attribute the Pure Energizing of God.[75]

While von Hugel would shrink from using this rough classification of Exclusive and Inclusive Mysticism as a tool to pigeon-hole all of the mystics of history, with

74. MER II, p. 366
75. Ibid.

qualifications it could be used to determine their relative validity. Thus, Meister Eckhart and George Fox represent Roman Catholic and Protestant Exclusive Mystics. Pseudo-Dionysius would be Exclusive unless incorporated into a more balanced whole. The adaptation of his works seen in Maximus, The Confessor, and St. Bonaventura represents its inclusion in a more Inclusive mystical synthesis. St. Augustine, St. Catherine of Genoa and Nicolas of Coes represent Inclusive Mystics. It will be noted that all of these were congenial to the Neo-Platonic emphasis but attempted to include what was valid in it with institutional and intellectual elements. Within the figure of St. John of the Cross can be seen the "watershed" of Inclusive and Exclusive Mysticism. Two strains can be noted in his works: the purely spiritual current which exaggerates the mystical element as the highest energizing in and for man and consequently dispenses with other and lower energizings and objects altogether; and the incarnational outlook which finds him deriving positive help from sense, reason and social intercourse. Side by side he can be found to say: "There is nothing in the world to be compared with God and he who loves any other thing together with Him wrongs Him;" and "No one desires to be loved except for his goodness; and when we love in this way, our love is pleasing unto God and in great liberty; and if there be attachment in it, there is greater attachment to God."[76]

Von Hugel's description of Inclusive Mysticism reveals

76. ASCENT OF MT. CARMEL, Bk. I, II, 4 and MER II, p. 353

significant similarities to other modern attempts to deal with this phenomenon. There are numerous parallels to Hocking's "Principle of Alternation." For Hocking the false mystic rejects one world, or sphere of reality, while "the true mystic is he who holds to the reality of both worlds, and leaves to time and effort the understanding of their union."[77] The Other Self and the finite world must both be affirmed and experienced in alternation. " . . . . in the process of attending to and dealing with the many, the vision of the One tends to vanish and must be renewed by empirical presence of its object. Likewise, in lifting the mind to the One, the sense of the many, with which the One must be thought, tends to fade, and God loses all meaning to the mind that regards him. The exclusive direction of the mind whether to the many or to the One is a self-destroying process: whereas the alternating of attention may be a self-developing process."[78] Although von Hugel would qualify Hocking's interpretation at many points he did not hesitate to recommend this treatment in the preface to the second edition of his MYSTICAL ELEMENT.[79] There are also affinities to the work of Paul Tillich, whose section on "Being and God" in his recent SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY covers similar ground to that of von Hugel's REALITY OF GOD. In his treatments of the "demonic" Tillich states that, "an ecstasy that drives us away from the reality and the demands of the present is destructive, and, if it pretends to be holy, it is demonic. In true ecstasy we receive ultimate

77. THE MEANING OF GOD IN HUMAN EXPERIENCE, p. 399
78. Ibid. p. 410 footnote
79. MER I, p. xv

power by the presence of the ultimate; in a false ecstasy one section of our being overwhelms the whole of our personality, emptying it and leaving it in a state of disintegration."[80] In his discussions of "reason in ecstasy" he distinguishes this from current "irrationalism." " . . . demonic possession destroys the rational structure of the mind, divine ecstasy preserves and elevates it, although transcending it."[81]

Once recognizing von Hugel's distinction it becomes apparent that the gulf which separates him from many so-called "anti-mystics" has been diminished. When John Oman writes that, "in the strict sense there is no such thing as a Christian mystic, because, in so far as there is use of an historical revelation and of a Church, with its cult, fellowship and active service of others, the religion is not mystical . . ."[82] it is clear that his definition of mysticism is very close to what von Hugel would name Exclusive Mysticism. This same tendency to restrict the word "mysticism" can be seen in the writings of Heiler, Brunner and Nygren. On the other hand, the Inclusive Mysticism of von Hugel shows many similarities to the "mixed mysticism" of Oman and the Christian "quasi-mysticism" of Paul Elmer More. Much misunderstanding has developed in recent theological discussion when the word "mysticism" has been denounced by a writer referring to Absolute or Exclusive Mysticism while the reader interpreted the denunciation as meaning Inclusive Mysticism. "Perhaps for the sake of

80. THE PROTESTANT ERA, p. 80
81. SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY, Vol. I, p. 114
82. THE NATURAL AND SUPERNATURAL, p. 420

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clarity it might be well to ascribe such a rigorously technical meaning to the word ("Mysticism" for Exclusive Mysticism). But, pending the ratification of that proposal by an ecumenical council of philosophers and philologists, in the meantime, since the word actually possesses such a broad meaning in English, it would seem less dictatorial not to reserve it for 'exclusive mysticism' only, unless that were expressly stated whenever it was so employed."[83] Von Hugel's designation points in the direction of the needed clarification.

V. Psycho-Physical and Temperamental Relations to Mysticism

The attempt to discriminate between a valid and invalid mysticism leads to the necessity of a provisional analysis of the relationship between psycho-physical and temperamental conditions and the expression of the mystical element. This analysis needs only be provisional at this point since a more thorough consideration of the relation of sense and spirit is involved in the discussion of epistemology; and the problem of ultimate causation involves a fuller treatment of the ontology implicit in von Hugel's interpretation.

Von Hugel's conclusions regarding the psycho-physical and temperamental conditions and their relationship to the mystical element are based upon a thorough, and at times tedious, empirical investigation of the circumstances attending the life of St. Catherine of Genoa. His study is not, however, limited to but one example. He has drawn

83. Dakin, A. H., VON HUGEL AND THE SUPERNATURAL, p. 166

freely upon the biographical and autobiographical accounts of Western mystics, especially where they provide psychological and physiological analyses. The writings of "The Spanish School," especially St. Teresa and St. John of the Cross, are frequently utilized at this point. His method was to sift and test the various accounts of St. Catherine's life (found in secondary sources of varied value) by the most rigorous scientific analysis, "as though all this were not secondary and but the material and occasion of the forces and self-determinations to be considered later on."[84] The genetic and psychological methods are, therefore, employed as if they were final. This provides highly necessary and suggestive descriptions of her physical and mental states. But von Hugel insists that this field of enquiry is insufficient to pass on the ultimate value. "We have, however, to guard most cautiously against our allowing this, our preliminary, analysis and description of psycho-physical states from imperceptibly blocking the way to, or occupying the ground of, our ultimate analysis and metaphysical synthesis and explanation. Only this latter will be able, by a final outward movement from within, to show the true place and worth of the more or less phenomenal series, passed by us in review on our previous inward movement from without."[85] He is careful to guard against the Philistinism of both the Rationalists and the older Supernaturalists by neither limiting his assent to facts by his ability to explain them, nor postulating the unmediated action of God wherever powers

84. MER II, p. 3
85. **Ibid.** p. 8

of explanation fail.

The life of St. Catherine is divided into three fairly distinct periods. The first period, covering from 1447 to 1477 includes the sixteen years of her girlhood, the first ten years of her married life, and the four years of her conversion and active penitence. Von Hugel finds traces in this period of an unusually high degree of spiritual sensitiveness and an "extraordinary close-knittedness of body and mind." It is evident that she possessed a congenitally melancholy temperament and that nothing but the rarest combination of conditions could have brought out her great but few and naturally excessive qualities of mind and heart. Von Hugel would be willing to apply William James' considerations as to the "gradualness of sudden conversions"[86] to the turning point in St. Catherine's life.

> And, in any case, this suddenness seems to belong rather to the temperamental peculiarities and necessary forms of her particular experiences than to the essence and content of her spiritual life. For, whatever she thinks, feels, says or does throughout her life, she does and experiences with actual suddenness, or at least with a sense of suddenness; and there is clearly no more necessary connection between such suddenness and grace and true renouncement, than there is between gradualness and mere nature; both suddenness and gradualness being but simple modes, more or less fixed for each individual, yet differing from each to each, modes in which God's grace and man's will interact and manifest themselves in different souls.[87]

The second period of St. Catherine's life consists of the central twenty-two years of her greatest productivity. This period marks the culmination and true measure of her life but has produced a minimum of data as to her psycho-

86. James. W., VARIETIES OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE, pp. 213-253
87. MER II, p. 30

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physical condition. This is quite natural since at this time she had neither Physician nor Confessor "and the very richness and balanced fulness of this epoch of her life may well have helped to produce but little that could have been specially seized and registered by either."[88] Nevertheless, this period does produce acts of fasting along with some ecstasies and visions. During these twenty years she went for seventy days annually -- thirty in Advent and forty in Lent -- with all but no food, while her life was as vigorous and active as when her nutrition was normal. Her ecstatic trances, which would last from two to eight hours, produced a simplification of physical functions, especially respiratory and circulatory. It follows that the amount of food required to heal the breach made by life's wear and tear would, by these ecstasies, be considerably reduced. Her visions did not deal with historical persons or scenes, but rather with metaphysical realities and relations -- God as source and end of all things, as light and food of the soul. "Whereas the non-ecstatic picturings of her last period are grandly original, and demonstrably based upon her own spiritual experience, these second-period ecstatic visions are readily traceable to New Testament, Neo-Platonist and Franciscan precursors, and have little more originality than this special selection from amongst other possible literary sources."[89]

The third period dates from 1497 to 1510 and is marked by increasing infirmity and abnormality. If the first period

88. Ibid. p. 33
89. Ibid. p. 34

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89. Ibid. p. 34

was that of preparation for the fruitful twenty years, the last period was like the price paid for such a rich expansion. It is this period which produced the occasion for her biographers to ascribe various abnormal sensations, impressions and moods to Divine origin. Von Hugel describes the likeness and unlikeness of her psycho-physical condition to hysteria.

It is on the basis of such an investigation as has been hinted at in these paragraphs and in collaboration with his wider studies that von Hugel drew his inferences. He believed that the following three laws cover in a general and somewhat schematic way the relations between psycho-physical peculiarities and sanctity.

1. "Intense spiritual energizing is accompanied by auto-suggestion and mono-ideism."

Von Hugel is not frightened by the word which has recently terrified religious people. If it be true that a certain special degree or at least potential psycho-physical sensitiveness and adaptability must be taken to be, not the producing cause, but a necessary condition for the exercise of any considerable range and depth of mind and will, the legitimacy of the heroic soul, "in attending to, calling up, and, as far as may be, both fixing and ever renovating certain few great dominant ideas, and in attempting by every means to saturate the imagination with images and figures, historical and symbolic, as so many incarnations of these great verities,"[90] naturally follows. Auto-suggestion is not the antonym of Reality and Truth, but of Hetero-suggestion in which the external stimuli determine the content and

90. Ibid. p. 42

direction of the thought. In auto-suggestion the freedom of the mind is evidenced by its ability to choose specific areas for the focus of attention out of innumerable possibilities. When this is taken simply phenomenally, with no attempt to trace in the process the pressure and stimulation of Ultimate Reality, it is no more abnormal than the auto-suggestion of the mathematician, the tactician, and the constructive statesman -- Newton, Napoleon and Richelieu. In all such cases the psycho-physical accompaniments of this profound mental-volitional energy are most marked. But to class such men as psycho-physical eccentrics solely according to their neural accompaniments, with no recourse to their "central spiritual truth and fruitfulness," would be the height of superficiality.

2. "Such mechanisms specially marked in Philosophers, Musicians, Poets, and Mystical Religionists."

Among those in whom the mystical element is especially predominant there will be a correspondingly larger amount of this psycho-physical impressionableness. This will vary in intensity from those who experience a mild form of the "prayer of quiet" to those who are absorbed in "ecstasy." This, in itself, is no more abnormal than are the highest flights and absorptions of the philosopher, musician or poet. "And yet, in such cases as Kant and Beethoven, a classifier of humanity according to its psycho-physical phenomena alone would put these great discoverers and creators, without hesitation, amongst hopeless and useless hypochondriacs."[91] Their actual value to humanity involves the use of other criteria.

91. Ibid. p. 42

3. "Ecstatics possess a peculiar psycho-physical organization."

Von Hugel notes the peculiar psycho-physical organization of St. Catherine and St. Teresa; in St. Catherine of Siena and St. Francis of Assisi in medieval times; and in St. Maria Magdalena dei Pazzi and St. Marguerite Marie Alacocque in modern times. Detailed exposition is given to this phenomenon in the lives of St. Paul and the prophet Ezekiel. But, while this peculiar organization can not be taken in itself as an evidence of supernatural grace, neither can it be dismissed as necessarily being an indication of an incurable mental disease. Here, especially, the distinction between the treasure and the vessel must be made. " . . . . the emphasis and decisions have to lie with, and to depend upon, the mental and volitional work and the spiritual truth and reality achieved in and for the recipient, and, through him, in and for others."[92]

The temptation to take the mystical element as the totality of the religious life and the "inconsistent" social passion with which the great mystics reject this temptation has already been observed. Here it is necessary to note a second great temptation which, once again, the great mystics have steadily resisted -- the temptation to attach a primary and independent importance to the psycho-physical form and means of these things, as against their spiritual-ethical content and end. Here St. Teresa and St. John of the Cross are especially emphatic. "Indeed all the great mystics, and this in precise proportion to their greatness, have ever

92. Ibid. p. 46

taught that, the mystical capacities and habits being but means and not ends, only such ecstasies are valuable as leave the soul, and the very body as its instrument, strengthened and improved; and that visions and voices are to be accepted by the mind only in proportion as they convey some spiritual truth of importance to it or to others, and as they actually help it to become more humble, true and loving."[93]

If, however, such psycho-physical peculiarities are not to be taken as ends, but means, the same must also be said of "perfect health" which is more frequently designated as the true end of human life. The ideal man is not simply a magnificient machine to which the mental, moral and spiritual character is incidentally attached. The ideal man makes his physical organism the best possible substratum, stimulus, instrument, material and expression for and of that spiritual personality. There is no question as to whether the spiritual life exacts its peculiar cost. The serious question is whether the specifically human effects and fruits of that life are worth that cost.

> The simple fact, then, of frequent and subsequent, or even of universal and concomitant ill health in such mystical cases, or even the proof of this ill health being a direct consequence or necessary condition of that mystical life, can but push back the debate, and simply raises the question as to the serious value of that habit and activity. Only a decision adverse to that serious value would constitute those facts into a condemnation of that activity itself.[94]

What, then is the test which confronts both the psycho-physically "peculiar" and "normal"? Von Hugel conceived this as the pragmatic test of "Perennial Freshness."[95] "And

93. Ibid. p. 47
94. Ibid. p. 58
95. Ibid. p. 47 f

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here again the truth, and more especially the divine origin of these apprehensions, is tested and guaranteed on and on by the consequent deepening of that spiritual and ethical fruitfulness and death to self, which are the common aspirations of every deepest moment and every sincerest movement within the universal heart of man."[96] From a strictly physiological or psychological point of view, the inmates of a mental asylum might furnish similar forms of ecstasy, vision and voices, to that of the saint. Nevertheless, when the test be made, not of form but content, of spiritual fruitfulness and of many-sided applicability, this surface-similarity yields at once to a fundamental difference. Both may exhibit an almost identical psycho-physically, supersensitive temperament. It is not the presence of this, but the use to which it is put which is the differentia. This is seen in the case of such great ecstatic mystics as Ezekiel, St. Paul, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Catherine of Siena, Jeanne d'Arc and St. Teresa. "All these, and countless others, would, quite evidently, have achieved less, not more, of interior light and of far-reaching helpfulness of a kind readily recognized by all specifically religious souls, had they been without the rest, the bracing, the experience furnished to them by their ecstasies and allied states and apprehensions."[97] The genuineness and depth of a mystic experience is, then not to be guaged by visions, ecstasies, or any surface sensations. It is to be judged by its ability to invigorate the will to new and higher creative enterprises;

96. Ibid. p. 50
97. Ibid. p. 47

to create new resiliency and freshness in the experiencer; to illumine and unify other phases of life; and to produce fresh insight by heightening all the cognitive, volitional and imaginiative powers so as to affect their selective and synthetic capacity.

While von Hugel made every effort to abide by the self-imposed limitations of the empirical method in his provisional analysis, there is no disguising of his metaphysical presuppositions. Although he felt no obligation to justify all that labelled itself as "mysticism," and shunned the temptation to quickly claim a Divine origin for every phenomenon, it is evident that, for him, the source of the overplus of the creative mystic, as over against an unproductive neurotic, was to be found in (1) the larger response of the Subject and (2) the initiating activity of the Divine Spirit. That which appears phenomenally and separately as a simple case of auto-suggestion "can and should be conceived, when studied in its ultimate cause and end, as due to the pressure and influence of God's spirit working in and through man, -- the Creator causing His own little human creature freely to create for itself some copy of and approach to his own eternally subsisting, substantial Cause and Crown . . . . we find again the conception of the Transcendent yet also Immanent Spirit, effecting in the human spirit the ever-increasing apprehension of Himself, accompanied in this spirit by an ever-keener sense of His incomprehensibility for all but Himself." [98]

98. Ibid. pp. 49, 50

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98. Ibid. pp. 49, 50

VI. Special Weaknesses and Strengths of Mysticism

The life in which the mystical element is awakened and developed to a dominant degree is characterized by its own special weaknesses and strengths; even as that life in which the institutional or intellectual elements predominate. Von Hugel finds these weaknesses and strengths to go together and designates seven such pairs in the latter half of Vol. II of his MYSTICAL ELEMENT.

1. The Mystic finds his supreme joy in the recollective movements of the soul and ever tends, qua Mystic, to neglect the absolutely necessary contact of the mind and will with the things of sense. In spite of the fact that no religious writers have been more prolific in vivid imagery derived from sense experience, the Mystic is tempted to insist that the life is filled with God to the degree that it is cut off from all sense contact. This aversion from Outgoing and from the world of sense contradicts both sound psychology and the Incarnational philosophy and practice of Christianity.

Nevertheless, this "Incoming" use of the materials furnished by the soul's Outgoing is most essential. "Indeed, it is the more difficult, and, though never alone sufficient, yet ever the more centrally religious, of the two movements necessary for the acquisition of spiritual experience and life."[99]

2. Similarly, the Mystic finds his full delight in all that approximates most nearly to Simultaneity, and Eternity; and, qua Mystic, turns from the Successive and Temporal as

99. MER II, p. 285

presented by history. It is this false abstraction from time which has frequently led to the despising of the temporal words and acts of Jesus Christ. This aversion from "Clock Time" is reflected in the Mystic's utilization of spatial images with the resulting concepts of a static and determinist type.

And yet, one-sided as this tends to be, the Mystic is clinging to the more specifically religious of the two equally necessary movements. For, "our deepest experiences testify to History itself being ever more than mere process, and to have within it a certain contribution from, a certain approximation to and expression of, Eternity."[100]

3. The Mystic tends toward an exclusive preoccupation with a "Pure Reception of the Purely Objective." This reveals the inveterate tendency toward Quietism whereby God should do and receive credit for all, whereas even a God-willed independence and power of self-excitation is disdained.[101] Thus, the Mystic pictures Grace, the Soul and God as though they were sensible objects sensibly impressing themselves upon his purely passive senses. This tendency is reinforced by his thirst for pictorial presentation and intuition. The place of a necessary, if limited, human activity in the apprehension of God is imperiled.

Nevertheless, the Mystic has seized once again upon the prior and central religious truth that all human activity presupposes Reality already around it and within it, as the stimulus and object for all this energizing. "And indeed the operations of Grace are ever more or less penetrating and

100. Ibid. p. 286
101. For an excellent treatment of Quietism as seen in the Fenelon-Bossuet controversy see MER II, pp. 129-181

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soliciting, though nowhere forcing, the free assent of the natural soul: we should be unable to seek God unless He had already found us and had thus, deep down within ourselves, caused us to seek and find Him. And hence thus again the most indispensable, the truest form of experience underlies reasoning, and is a kind of not directly analyzable, but indirectly most operative, intuition or instinct of the soul."[102]

4. Closely related to the Quietist tendency is the Mystic's optimism, which frequently accompanies a superficial view of man's responsibility for evil. Here there is great indebtedness to the conception of evil as a privation of the good (Negative Evil) as worked out by Plotinus, Proclus, Pseudo-Dionysius, and most consistently by Spinoza. In Christian Theology it can be traced in one current of Augustine's writings,[103] St. Thomas, and Meister Eckhart. While it must be noted that Christian Mystics were even more deeply indebted in their volitional life and in a large part of their speculation by the concrete experiences of sin, conscience, and Grace; and that the modern alternative of "positive-negative" is not simply identical with the scholastic "substantial-accidental;" and that, once formulated in the latter way, they were wise to refuse to hypostatize Evil; it is still true that they tended to overlook the depth of direct perversity and intentional malignity residing in man's will.

Still, the Mystics have not been wholly heretical in

102. IBID. p. 287
103. To note the two strains side by side in Augustine's CONFESSIONS see "Evil, Negative," VII, 12 etc. "Evil, Positive," VI, 15; VIII, 5, 11, etc.

102. Ibid. p. 287

103. To note the two striking aims by side in Augustine's CONFESSIONS see "Evil, Negative," VII, 12 etc. "Evil, Positive," VI, 12; VIII, 5; 11, etc.

their witness to the beauty, truth, and goodness of the world, of life, and of God. In his treatment of Kierkegaard, who set himself against the post-Kantian loss of the recognition of radical evil, Prof. H. Hoffding asserts the legitimate need for this which Mystics have proclaimed so consistently. "It is part of the essential character of human consciousness, as a Synthesis and an organizing Unity that, as long as the life of that consciousness lasts at all, not only contrast and tension, but also concentration and equilibrium must manifest themselves. Taking life's standard from life itself, we cannot admit its decisive constituent to lie in tension alone."[104] The Mystics have been the great reminders of this compensating truth and movement.

5. Mystics have frequently been tempted to yield to a static conception of man's spirit as a kind of substance of a definite, final size and dignity, which but demands the removal of disfiguring impurities. This is derived or influenced by the Neo-Platonic idea of every soul having already existed, perfectly spotless, previous to its incarnation. Thus, the ideal for each soul's future would have been already real in each soul's past. With such a conception the body is, largely, the tomb. The picture of the prehistoric fall gains in importance and unites with forms of the doctrine of Original Sin which deny man's responsibility. In Christian Mysticism, this conception is challenged by the Biblical doctrine of the

104. Hoffding, H., SOREN KIERKEGAARD, pp. 130, 131

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Imago Dei and the doctrine and practice of Pure Love, which both allows for limitless increase in the participation in Infinite Love and faces evil as a positive and subtle force expressed in self-adoration, not the sensual tendencies proceeding from the Body. But when Neo-Platonist elements have triumphed the soul is seen as a mirror "of a particular fixed size and fixed intensity of lustre; its business here below consists in removing the impurities adhering to this mirror's surface, and in guarding it against fresh stains."[105]

Yet even apart from the corrective of the doctrine of Pure Love, von Hugel would insist that the Mystic was emphasizing a valid element in the Catholic doctrine of the Justitia Originalis. "For each soul is doubtless intended, from the first, to express a particular thought and wish of God, to form one, never simply replaceable member in His Kingdom, to attain to a unique kind and degree of personality; and though it can refuse to endorse and carry out this plan, the plan remains within it, in the form of never entirely suppresible longings. The mystic, then sees much here also."[106]

6. The Mystic, in one of his moods (the corresponding, contradictory mood will be subsequently listed), so exalts the difference of nature between himself and God and His utter incomprehensibility that he tends to cut away all sufficient ground for intercourse or intelligent interpretation of this "Wholly Other" God. This strain, so vividly expressed in St. John of the Cross and St. Catherine, largely stems from the "Negative Theology" of Pseudo-Dionysius'

105. MER II, p. 298
106. Ibid. pp. 301, 302

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105. MMH II, p. 298
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MYSTICAL THEOLOGY.[107] Whereas one should maintain "an absolute difference between God, and all our downward inclinations, acts, and habits, and an indefinite difference, in worth and dignity, between God and the very best that, with His help, we can aim at and become"[108] it is ruinous to stop short with the proclamation of the "Yawning Abyss" of the absolute qualitative difference between the soul's deepest possibilities and ideals, and God.

Still, this Mystic Agnosticism has been a healthy corrective to sentimental and literalistic misunderstandings of the Divine nature. It has been the channel through which a reverent sense of awe before the Transcendence of God has been preserved. There is permanent validity to the words of St. John of the Cross:

> One of the greatest favours, bestowed transiently on the soul in this life, is to enable it to see so distinctly and to feel so profoundly, that it cannot comprehend Him at all. These souls are herein, in the same degree, like the Saints in Heaven, where they who know Him most perfectly perceive most clearly that He is infinitely incomprehensible; for those who have the less clear vision do not perceive so distinctly as the others how greatly He transcends their vision.[109]

7. In a mood which seems to contradict the emphasis on Transcendence, the Mystic so stresses the Immanence of God in the human soul and the necessity of "the drop being lost in the ocean of the Divine" that all individuality

107. For the more sober and corrective teaching of Pseudo-Dionysius see the third chapter of his MYSTICAL THEOLOGY where degrees of worth are recognized among the affirmative attributes.
108. MER II, p. 290
109. Quoted in MER II, p. 51. See ASCENT OF MT. CARMEL, pp. 159, 163: 264, 265, 102, 195; 26, 27; SPIRITUAL CANTICLE, pp. 206, 207, 238.

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and moral relations tend to be obliterated. This inevitable Pantheistic temptation, whereby the Braham and the Atman are one, has appeared in all variations of mysticism, including the Neo-Platonic versions which have flowered on Christian soil. "And yet . . . . Christianity has, in its fundamental Revelation and Experience, ever implied and affirmed such a conception of Unity, of Self-Surrender, and of Divine Action, as to render any Pantheistic interpretation of these things ever incomplete and transitional."[110]

Yet, even as the one-sided emphasis on Transcendence could not be summarily dismissed, this emphasis on Immanence is not without important insight. Mystics in this vein (again St. Catherine of Genoa and St. John of the Cross) have expressed the justifiable longing for purgation from petty individuality and egoistic separateness. They have, frequently in language which must not be taken literally, witnessed to the important fact that God is not a Thing alongside of other things or even simply another, higher Person, but the Spirit, our spirit's Origin, Sustainer, and End, "in whom we live and move and have our being."

The existence of <u>both</u> of these latter weaknesses and strengths in the same tradition and frequently in the same person is, in itself, a significant fact which must be given more attention in Chapter Four.

An analysis of these pairs of corresponding weaknesses and strengths further confirms von Hugel's contention that the mystical element is an "element" and never the religious

110. MER II, p. 334

life in its totality. These weaknesses and strengths "ever spring respectively from an attempt to make Mysticism be the all of religion, and from a readiness to keep it as but one of the elements more or less present in, and necessary for, every degree and form of the full life of the human soul."[111]

111. Ibid. pp. 290,291

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CHAPTER THREE

CRITICAL REALIST EPISTEMOLOGY AND MYSTICISM

I. Characteristics of Von Hugel as Philosopher of Religion

II. The Sources of Von Hugel's Epistemology

III. The Components of Von Hugel's Epistemology

IV. The Mystic Way

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I. Characteristics of Von Hugel as Philosopher of Religion

Von Hugel was frequently the recipient of the ambiguous appellation "apologist." Following the publication of the first volume of his ESSAYS AND ADDRESSES ON THE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION, The Times Literary Supplement review described the Baron as "a great apologist of the Roman Catholic Church." This occasioned the subsequent disclaimer in the next issue:

> A dog who is quietly conscious of being but a dog, and of having long striven just to be a dog, and nothing more or other, may be allowed, perhaps, to feel some perplexity amidst his gratitude upon finding himself first prize among cats . . . . . I should feel myself fatally hampered and oppressed by such a role as that of apologist, even though it be the first of all living Roman Catholic apologists, and though it be for the Church, or for Christ, or for just God Himself. More and more to live the spiritual life, increasingly to penetrate into the living Realities it reveals, and to express my discoveries, indefinitely deepened, extended, tested and standing by those of others, as faithfully and fearlessly as I can: this alone I can strive to do.[1]

The sphere of the Intellectual Element in Religion has already been noted. Here it will be necessary to mark the distinguishing features of von Hugel's conception of "thought in the service of faith," since these limit and are reflected in his treatment of philosophical themes.

One of his few treatments of the relation of thought

1. The Times Literary Supplement, Dec. 22, 1921

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and faith is found at the close of his essay "Religion and Reality."[2] Using the illustration of the Winchester Cathedral whose foundation of oaken beams was surrounded by swamps and sands, von Hugel described the work of divers and architects whose task it was to examine and replace the beams with concrete piers. Similarly, his task was that of probing foundations -- Religious and Christian. But in his case the foundation was found to consist of two inter-dependent, interclamped rock-masses: the slumbering sense and need of the Abiding and Eternal; and the revealed personal religion which was the clarified answer to that confused asking. These foundations were found as "Givennesses of an evidential, revelational, or other-than-human, a more-than-human quality." Still, much work was needed in the renovation and re-arrangement of the structure which had been reared upon this foundation. But in his work of philosophy it was not "preventing shifting, swampy foundations from spreading their sapping influence upwards, but, on the contrary, in eliminating, from the various stages of builder's work reared upon the sound and solid rock-foundations, whatever may impede those stages from full reception of this soundness and solidity."[3] The necessary dispositions for the realization of this soundness were: the autonomous development of the non-religious faculties and associations of man; the recognition of worthy elements in other religions than one's own with the avoidance of all attempts at forced conformity; and a utilization of the methods of history and

2. E&A I, pp. 65, 66
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3. Ibid, p. 69

philosophy in dealing with the documents and experiences of religion itself.

His philosophic work was, therefore, "defensive;" it was his task to so "clear away" the obstructions that Ultimate Reality might not be obscured but vividly apprehended. Even as he assumed that the reality of an external world could be established by the removal of objections to that reality, so "our removal of objections to the reality of the Superhuman Reality necessarily establishes its reality for us -- since there, again, is the vivid impression, the sense of a still deeper, a different, trans-human Reality which penetrates and sustains ourselves and all things, and clamours to be taken as It gives Itself."[4] The assumption of the "common man" (whom von Hugel always felt obliged to take seriously) concerning the objective reality of the external world, the possibility of some knowledge, and the operative presence of some sort of God he believed to be justified. The onus probandi lies with him who labels this as illusion. His method was not to seek to establish his presuppositions by argument, but to refute the arguments of those who called these illusions. His treatment of Feuerbach is an illustration of this technique.[5] The belief itself would stand out ipso facto when the objections were shown to be ill-founded.

While there are times when von Hugel's constructive work disregards these limitations, this is his characteristic note. He did not, however, set himself to the task of

4. Ibid, p. 44
5. E&A I, pp. 20-66

refuting all attacks upon Christianity or himself. With his usual modesty he could assert:

> I do not see, I have never seen, why any man should be called upon to answer everything, or why a position may not be profoundly true though it involves at once difficulties beyond solution by the wit of man. Not only do we see here in a glass darkly, but often and at many points we do not see at all; would it not be better simply to admit this where it is really necessary, and, nevertheless, go on insisting upon our light where it is light?[6]

"Solving" problems was not the philosopher's only or most important task. Much would be achieved when, without any definite counter-theory, the facts and problems were formulated more adequately and the premature solution was shown to be inadequate. He was willing to leave many problems open.

Before the day when the word "existential" had become a cliche, von Hugel demonstrated those traits which are now lauded as the acme of intellectual virtue. The reality and knowledge of God was not to be apprehended from the "balcony" but from the "road." "The thirst after, the longing for, the reaching out and the crying aloud for God, for the Reality which underlies, environs, protests, and perfects all the lesser realities and all our apprehensions of them -- this will have to impel and sustain our long search after a more explicit grasp of what we already dimly hold, of what in strictness, already holds us from without and from within."[7] It is in this same passage in which he relates religious passion and philosophical formulation that he stresses that aspect of Ultimate Reality which made his critical realist epistemology a necessity. "The last reality for us men to

6. RG, p. 124
7. Ibid, p. 36

reach with any full analysis is always the first, not only in worth, but in existence and in operation. It is only because God is so really within us, only because of His prevenience and incarnation, that we find His traces in our need and our perception of Him variously everywhere. These traces are thus not of our own making, but they proceed from His action and His Being -- they are real evidences of the reality of God."[8] It was also his characteristic to be aware of the situation in which he stood and to frankly lay bare his own prejudices and presuppositions at the outset of any serious inquiry.[9]

Von Hugel's lack of systematic thought and his abhorrence of too much clarity in profound matters has been variously praised and deplored by subsequent students. It was thoroughly characteristic of him to utter with vehemence: "If I could understand religion as I understand that two and two make four, it would not be worth having. To me, if I can see things through and through, I get uneasy -- I feel it's a fake. I know I have left something out, I've made some mistake."[10] Consequently he believed that minds belong, roughly speaking, to two classes: (1) the mystical and positive, and (2) the scholastic and theoretical. The latter were most at home in systems, clear-cut concepts, and carefully limited classifications. The former, in which he classed himself, lacked precision but were characterized by their close touch with the world of fact and experience and their sense of awe before the environing realities.

8. Ibid, p. 36
9. RG, pp. 24f., 161; MER I, pp. xxv f.; E&A II, pp. 59f., 91f
10. LN, p. xvii

> The deeper we get into any reality, the more numerous will be the questions we cannot answer. For myself I cannot conceive truth, or rather reality, as a geometrical figure of luminous lines, within which is sheer truth, outside of which is sheer error; but I have to conceive such reality as light, in its centre blindingly luminous, having rings around it of lesser and lesser light, growing dimmer and dimmer until we are left in utter darkness. I cannot answer the endless questions naturally provoked by my positions; but this incapacity need not prove more than that I am a finite mind, and that, although other finite minds can and will correct its weaknesses and errors, and although the realm of light can and will be indefinitely enlarged, yet its borders will continue fringed -- they will never be clear-cut frontiers. For reality is more than any and all our imaginings of it. It is more than truth; it overwhelms whilst it supports us; and it will have produced one of its chief functions and effects if it keeps us thoroughly humbled in its presence -- from the presence of the daisy to the presence and reality of God.[11]

These features of von Hugel's thought must be observed if his epistemology is to be appreciated, let alone understood. He had not the slightest desire to work out a more satisfying epistemological theory in order to enhance the prestige of an impoverished field of philosophy. He realized the necessity of such a venture and expressed his keen desire that his friend, Norman Kemp Smith, would perform such a task. But, for him, the theory of knowledge was ancillary to the doctrine of God. He is to be seen at his sketchiest at this point. Nevertheless, even if Rudolf Metz is correct in calling this "the weakest side of his doctrine, a by-product, simple and almost primitive in character"[12] it is significant for an understanding of his interpretation of the mystical apprehension of the Divine Reality.

11. RG, p. 33
12. Metz, R., A HUNDRED YEARS OF BRITISH PHILOSOPHY, pp. 799, 800

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This chapter will examine the sources which von Hugel utilized in formulating his epistemology; the major elements comprising his theory; and the relation of this to the life in which the mystical element finds full and harmonious expression. While the main lines of his theory will be delineated, the nature of God thus apprehended will be more fully developed in Chapter Four and the "techniques of realization" will be largely reserved for Chapter Five.

II. The Sources of Von Hugel's Epistemology

In order to appreciate the epistemological foundation of von Hugel's interpretation of Christian Mysticism it will be necessary to examine the sources upon which he drew in the formulation of his thought. This involves an understanding of that which he reacted against in modern philosophic thought; the tensions which he sought to resolve or maintain; and the currents in which he believed resided the most adequate help for future constructions.

Whereas Ancient Philosophy was predominantly Cosmo-centric, and Medieval Philosophy was Theo-centric, Modern Philosophy has been Anthropo-centric. The rise of scientific methodology in contrast to Medieval "other-worldliness" and the assertion of the rights of the individual against the collective, especially where the latter had equated a conditioned cultural expression with the Unconditioned Reality, have given to the "modern period" its peculiar orientation. But, while modern subjectivism is an understandable reaction to the distorted and oppressive objectivism

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of an earlier period, it has by no means been free from its own inherent weaknesses, distortions, and oppressions. Von Hugel, as a Roman Catholic Modernist (in the sense already defined) shared the dominant concerns of his era. Nevertheless, he was acutely critical of those basic elements which failed to provide adequate foundations for religious and cultural life.

In the very formulation of the problems posed by Rene Descartes, von Hugel saw most vividly the seeds of dissolution. In the fundamental formula -- "cogito, ergo sum" -- the subject and object, which are always interconnected in man's actual experience and thus should be assumed in this interconnection, were severed from each other at the very inauguration of the modern period. What is accepted as certain is that "I think," not that "I think such and such realities," or, at least, "I think such and such objects."[13]

> The appeal here to experience and to its analysis was, then, right; what was wrong was the exclusion, before any and all investigation and without any justification, of one entire third of every living experience. For all experience is always three-fold: it is always simultaneously experience of the subject, of the object, and of the overbridging thought; indeed, clear consciousness always first concerns the object, and only much later on the subject. And thus, through that artificial abstraction, there promptly arose such sheer figments of the brain as knowledge, not of objects at all, but of subjective states alone; and (stranger still) knowledge that objects exist, and that they all have an inside, but an inside which is never actually revealed to us by the qualities of those objects; and (culminating miracle of strangeness) that this inside abides ever essentially unknowable by us, and yet, all the same, we absolutely know that it contradicts all these appearances. Man thus, though well within the universe, isolates himself from it; he imprisons himself in his own faculties, and, as to anything further, knows only that objects exist as to which these faculties essentially and inevitably

13. RG, p. 188

mislead him.

> Here no criticism of the logic of the position is sufficient; indeed, such criticisms mostly end by bearing unwilling, or even unwitting, testimony to the general self-consistency of this subjectivism. Only a criticism, not of the conclusions as consistent or not with their premises, but of these premises as adequate or not to real experience, is sufficient. And such a criticism requires, not cleverness, clear-headedness, and confidence, but wisdom, wide experience, and humble docility at the hands of facts and of life.14

In his subsequent dualism, whereby Descartes discriminates two species of entities, matter and soul, the foundation is laid for those cleavages which have separated modern philosophy and science and given rise to modern empirical and rationalistic epistemologies. In his SCIENCE AND THE MODERN WORLD, Whitehead has summarized this plight: "Those principles lead straight to the theory of a materialistic, mechanistic nature, surveyed by cogitating minds. After the close of the seventeenth century, science took charge of the materialistic nature, and philosophy took charge of the cogitating minds. Some schools of philosophy admitted an ultimate dualism; and the various idealistic schools claimed that nature was merely the chief example of the cogitations of minds. But all schools admitted the Cartesian analysis of the ultimate elements of nature."15 Whitehead's objection to the formulation of the "Subject-Object Antithesis" is due to the fact that this doctrine of subjects with private worlds of experience leads inescapably to solipsism. A more accurate formulation of the primary situation disclosed in cognitive experience is "ego-object amid objects." "The

14. Ibid, pp. 188, 189
15. Whitehead, A. N., SCIENCE AND THE MODERN WORLD, p. 145

ego-object, as consciousness here-now, is conscious of its experient essence as constituted by its internal relatedness to the world of realities, and to the world of ideas. But the ego-object, in being thus constituted, is within the world of realities and exhibits itself as an organism requiring the ingression of ideas for the purpose of this status among realities."[16] This formulation, so close to what von Hugel sought for religious purposes, is an indication of the provisional congeniality of the Neo-Realist "school."

The effects of the "Cartesian Faux Pas" can be traced by following the two streams of thought set in motion by the "Father of Modern Philosophy." On the Continent the rationalist element in Descartes prevailed with its insistence that clear and distinct ideas give the only secure knowledge. Thus, reality must be regarded as subject to the laws of our thinking. This led through Spinoza and Leibnitz to Wolf. In England the empirical criticism prevailed. This led from Locke through Berkeley to Hume. Kant can be seen as the Giant Colossus seeking to correlate both English and Continental lines of thought.[17]

Even as the historical answers to the epistemological question are empiricism and rationalism, so the classification by result, rather than method, yields the "realist" and "idealist" philosophies. Von Hugel's reaction to the weakness of modern philosophy, especially in its inability to deal with the kind of knowledge in which the inclusive

16. Ibid, p. 152
17. See Temple's, NATURE, MAN AND GOD, Lecture III

ego-object, as consciousness here-now, is conscious of its experient essence as constituted by its internal relatedness to the world of realities, and to the world of ideas. But the ego-object, in being thus constituted, is within the world of realities and exhibits itself as an organism requiring the integration of ideas for the purpose of this status among realities."[16] This formulation, so close to what von Hügel sought for religious purposes, is an indication of the provisional contemporaneity of the Neo-Realist "school."

The effects of the "Cartesian faux pas" can be traced by following the two streams of thought set in motion by the "Father of Modern Philosophy." On the Continent the rationalist element in Descartes prevailed with its insistence that clear and distinct ideas give the only secure knowledge. Thus, reality must be regarded as subject to the laws of our thinking. This led through Spinoza and Leibnitz to Wolf. In England the empirical criticism prevailed. This led from Locke through Berkeley to Hume. Kant can be seen as the Giant Colossus seeking to correlate both English and Continental lines of thought.[17]

Even as the historical answers to the epistemological question are empiricism and rationalism, so the classification by result, rather than method, yields the "realist" and "idealist" philosophies. Von Hügel's reaction to the weakness of modern philosophy, especially in its inability to deal with the kind of knowledge in which the inclusive

16. Ibid, p. 152
17. See Temple's, NATURE, MAN AND GOD, Lecture III

mystic is a specialist, can best be seen in his criticisms of the inadequacy of both contemporary realism and idealism when confronted with the whole range of man's possible knowledge.

Von Hugel's respect and admiration for the methods and success of the various forms of realism -- Positivism, Pragmatism and Empiricism -- has already been observed. Nor was the approval limited only to the development of the physical sciences. Throughout his life he was to champion the rightful use of these methods within the religious and mystical life. This legacy, as a citizen in the modern world, had come to him at great personal cost and not merely as an inheritance. Nevertheless, he considered it "a mere vulgar error" to accept the Positivist limitation of trans-subjectively valid knowledge to direct sense perception and to the laws of the Empirical Sciences.[18] He would have agreed whole-heartedly with E. Recejac that "if modern thought has cast off the fetters of religious dogma only to make another prison-house of the empirical consciousness, and if every mental combination which does not reflect the necessity of casual succession has to be relinquished, the second bondage will be no better than the one just ended."[19] While he was anxious to extend the limits as widely as possible for the use of biological, psychological, and sociological research, he was convinced that these limits were finally set, not by impotence but by definition. The higher one went in the scale of reality -- from inorganic life through man to God --

18. MER II, p. 275f
19. Recejac, E., ESSAY ON THE BASES OF THE MYSTIC KNOWLEDGE, p. 270

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18. MER II, p. 275f
19. Rosslyn, E., ESSAY ON THE BASES OF THE MYSTIC
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the more inadequate did the empirical method appear. It was most valuable where the object examined was characterized by isolation, regularity and generality. It was increasingly restricted to the degree in which totality, individuality and freedom were characteristic of the object; or in which the object became less "object" and more "subject." In the midst of an essay on Hell is to be found one of the finest summaries of the Baron's attitude which was expressed fragmentarily in numerous writings.

> The purely naturalistic view of man conceives him as a mere superior animal, which projects its own largely fantastic wishes on to the void or the unknown, and which then fishes them back as objective realities distinct from itself their true creator. And this view is the more plausible, the more quickly statable, the more vividly picturable, the alone readily transmittable, view. But then, the view has all these qualities, precisely because it stops short at the surface-impressions of things, and remains utterly inadequate to all the deeper and deepest implications, requirements and ends of knowledge in general, and of art, ethics, philosophy and religion in particular. . . . Every at all noble, every even tolerably adequate, outlook always possesses some such more than merely empirical, simply contingent, or purely material and mechanical character. Plato, the Stoics, Plotinus possess this outlook, although in very different degrees; it ruled the Western world, during the Christian Middle Ages; and, after the largely negative rationality of most of the Renaissance, it gave its note of pathetic distinction and splendour to the great spirit of Spinoza gravely cramped by Pantheism though it was in its speculation. In Kant it again reappears in a more theistic setting, and with the deep perception of that deep fact -- radical evil -- of man's frequent declaring, willing and doing what he well knows to be false and bad, but unpleasant; in Schopenhauer it relieves the general pessimistic oppression with glimpses of a Beauty abiding and all-sustaining. And now, in these our times, we are again coming, in different lands and from different experiences and starting points, to schemes really adequate, indeed deeply friendly, to this Transcendence present in all our nobler aspirations, acts and ends. Thus every profound search after, or belief in, the fundamental truth or essential beauty or satisfying goodness

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> The purely naturalistic view of man conceives him as a mere superior animal, which protects its own largely fantastic values on to the void or the unknown, and which then risks them back as objective realities distinct from itself their true creator. And this view is the more plausible, the more quickly stated, the more vividly picturable, the alone really transmittable, view. But then, the view has all these qualities, precisely because it stops short at the surface-impressions of things, and remains utterly independent to all the deeper and deepest implications, requirements and ends of knowledge in general, and of art, ethics, philosophy and religion in particular. . . . Every at all noble, every even tolerably adequate, outlook always possesses some such more than merely empirical, simply contingent, or purely material and mechanical character. Plato, the Stoics, Plotinus possess this outlook, although in very different degrees; it ruled the Western world, during the Christian Middle Ages; and, after the largely negative rationality of most of the Renaissance, it gave its note of patheticd distinction and splendour to the great spirit of Spinoza gravely cramped by Pantheism though it was in its speculation. In Kant it again reappears in a more theistic setting, and with the deep perception of that deep fact -- radical evil -- of man's frequent deviating, willing and doing what he well knows to be false and bad, but unpleasant; in Schopenhauer it relieves the general pessimistic oppression with glimpses of a Beauty abiding and all-sustaining. And now, in these our times, we are again coming, in different lands and from different experiences and starting points, to schemes really adequate, indeed deeply friendly, to this Transcendence present in all our nobler aspirations, acts and ends. Thus every profound search after, or belief in, the fundamental truth or essential beauty or satisfying goodness

> of anything -- when we press it duly home and sincerely and delicately analyze it -- overflows the ordinary, superficially obvious, requirements of man's knowledge, action, life. In each case we get a scheme that looks too big and too ambitious for us little men, and that involves alternatives too wide and deep for the average moments of the average mortal.[20]

But if von Hugel found the empirical method too restrictive for the most important objects of knowledge he was even more strongly convinced of the inadequacy of idealistic philosophies when dealing with the ultimate issues of the "Divine-Human Encounter." The rise of the Neo-Idealist movement in Britain was known to him "from the inside." He believed that the barrenness of the previous Materialism had been the occasion for the acceptance of Hegelianism as the true philosophical auxiliary of Christianity. If Materialism was to be defeated it had seemed natural to welcome a philosophy which despised matter and declared all that was real to be Spirit and Spirit only. At the time when Agnosticism was rampant an alliance was made with the philosophy which affirmed that man not only knows God but <u>is</u> God, or at least a part of God, and constitutes Him with the aid of other spirits.[21] But, while understandable, it was incompetent to deal with the depths of human freedom, hence sin, and that all-important element of "otherness" in God. "There is no room in this system for humility, for contrition, for adoration, because no room for sin or for God."[22] With Andrew Seth Pringle-Pattison, whose analysis of this question was followed with few exceptions, he agreed: "The

20. E&A I, pp. 207,208
21. RG, p. 32
22. Ibid.

20. MEA I, pp. 207,208
21. MG, p. 32
22. Ibid.

radical error both of Hegelianism and of the allied English doctrine I take to be the identification of the human and the divine self-consciousness, or, to put it more broadly, the unification of consciousness in a single Self."[23]

Von Hugel's progression of thought in relation to Idealism illuminates his quest for a more adequate epistemology. In the Introduction to THE REALITY OF GOD he tells of his early efforts to find in Hegelianism "the most adequate formulation of these deepest things" and his assumption that it was "baptizable and indeed baptized." Nevertheless, as he looked back upon it, he was sure that his mind "was never really comfortable in these, at bottom, fantastic curtailments of what we really do and achieve, of what is really given to us every time we know, and indeed think, at all."[24] His frustrating experience of seeing many of his "modernist" friends succumb to an impoverishing immanentism is reflected in his ETERNAL LIFE. In 1912 he introduced this work by writing: "There is throughout the book a vigilant attention to the nature, range, and implications of our knowledge -- to Epistemology, especially to the ontological character and witness of Religion -- the central position occupied, in the fullest experiences and articulations of Religion, by the Reality, the Difference, and yet the Likeness, of God. A critical Realism -- a Realism not of Categories or Ideas but of Organisms and Spirits, of **the** Spirit, a purified but firm Anthropomorphism are here maintained throughout as essential to the full vigour and clear articulation of

23. HEGELIANISM AND PERSONALITY, p. 226
24. RG, p. 3

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Religion."[25] In his Preface to the second edition of THE MYSTICAL ELEMENT, written in 1923, he recounts the process by which he had come to appreciate the conviction of Troeltsch, arrived at twenty years earlier than his own, concerning "how slendor was the religious power and fruitfulness of all Hegelian interpretations of religion."[26] This preface contains his most mature expression of that which he had sought.

> By now I preceive with entire clarity that, though religion cannot ever be conceived as extant at all without a human subject humanly apprehending the Object of Religion, the reality of the Object (in itself the Subject of all subjects) and its presence independently of all our apprehension of it, -- that its Givenness is the central characteristic of all religion worthy of the name. The Otherness, the Prevenience of God, the One-sided Relation between God and Man, these constitute the deepest measure and touchstone of all religion. And, if this be so, it follows that religion has no subtler, and yet also no deadlier, enemy in the region of the mind, than every and all Monism. The two Idealisms, the Real and Subjective, and indeed also Materialism, doubtless possess their element of truth for certain stages of inquiry or for certain ranges of abiding fact or permanent apprehension. But the central and final philosophic system and temper of mind which is alone genuinely appropriate to the subject-matter of religion is, I cannot doubt, some kind of Realism . . The Realism we require will have to be, not a Naive Realism (which would simply ignore all the mixture of truth and error since Descartes, and the criticism also of Kant's first Critique itself), but a Critical Realism constituted after, and in part through the most careful sifting of these various Idealisms, Materialisms, even Skepticisms -- theories which often bear along, in their muddy or perverse currents, fragments of truth demanding incorporation in a system truly congenial to them.[27]

These criticisms of current theories of knowledge and analyses of Ultimate Reality reveal von Hugel's ontological presuppositions and his implicit, if not carefully worked out,

25. EL, pp. xi, xii
26. MER II, p. xvi
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epistemology. Being wary of all temptations to "tidy up reality of all kinds into what he thinks such reality ought actually to be" he conceived his task in epistemology in similar terms to James B. Pratt who said: "But the task of the epistemologist as I understand it is not to describe what we should like, but to expound the conditions of knowledge actually obtaining in the somewhat unsatisfactory world we have to live in."[28] This does not mean that by empirical analysis one could arrive at a theory of knowledge, empirical or otherwise. In writing concerning the "Three Proofs of Realism" George Santayana concluded: "It appears . . . . that all reasonable human discourse makes realistic assumptions; so that these proofs, as I venture to call them, are necessarily circular: without assuming realism it would be impossible to prove realism or anything else."[29] Nevertheless it was necessary to attempt to do full justice to the variety of "objects" to be apprehended, rather than conform descriptions of knowing to one class of objects.

In contrast to Ethics and Politics, which proclaim <u>oughtness</u> and seek to produce certain human acts and dispositions and to organize society in various ways, von Hugel found Religion to affirm "a supreme Isness, a Reality or Realities other and greatest in man, as existent prior to, and independently of, the human subjects' affirmation of It

28. ESSAYS IN CRITICAL REALISM, pp. 104, 105
29. Op. cit., p. 183. See Pratt on the presuppositions of Critical Realism, op. cit., p. 107: "The critical realist's belief (like everyone elses') in the existence of such a world is, of course, too fundamental and spontaneous to be based on any form of reasoning; but it is justifiable by reasoning."

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or of Them . . . . Religion as such has ever to do, not with human thoughts, but with Realities other and higher than man; not with the production of what ought to be, but with fear, propitiation, love, adoration of what already is."[30] For this reason, in the opening chapters of THE REALITY OF GOD, his most extensive epistemological discussion begins by showing the affinities of Science and Religion in dealing with an "Object" and he deals only secondarily with Ethics.

> I think, then that the natural, external world (especially in so far as it is organic) and our knowledge of it possess certain characteristics which bring them nearer to the central characteristics of religion than do the ethical world and our apprehension of it. This because religion, at least, among the mystics (and I believe that, on this point at least, the mystics merely dive deeper into and bring out more explicitly the sap or the central core of the religious passion), consists centrally in the sense of Presence -- the sense of an overflowing Existence distinct from our own and in Adoration of the same.

Clearly then, von Hugel is concerned to describe the knowing process involved in an apprehension of God who is objectively other but who by His very nature can never be treated as an "object alongside of other objects" and thus eludes the empirical analysis. While in no sense disdaining the most precise experimental knowledge in areas where it is applicable he was anxious to treat with equal honesty that less precise but more ultimately significant knowledge -- the knowledge of the Reality of God.

The distinction of two kinds of knowledge -- roughly, knowledge <u>about</u> and knowledge <u>of</u> -- finds frequent expression in the literature of philosophy and religion. History abounds with conflicts whose underlying issue is seen to be the

30. E&A I, p. 23

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30. REA I, p. 23

justification for, and interrelation and tensions of, these two types of knowing processes. The Greek language, with its genius for distinguishing shades of meaning, reveals these emphases in its words for "know." The tenses coming from εἴδω and retained by usage form two families, of which one signifies "to see," the other "to know." The most general use is to designate the perceiving by the senses, but it also was used to imply understanding or the cherishing of an object. The antithesis of sense perception was expressed by συνιέναι. This implied native insight, or the soul's capacity of itself not only to lay hold of the phenomena of the outer world through the senses, but by combination (σύν and ἵέναι) to arrive at their underlying laws. The word γινωσκειν marked an advance beyond sense perception. It denoted a knowledge grounded in personal experience and could unite cognitive, sexual and mystical elements. The distinction between two types of knowledge is utilized in various ways by contemporary writers. Bertrand Russell makes a celebrated distinction between two types of knowledge, called respectively "knowledge by acquaintance" and "knowledge by description."[31] Martin Buber, with quite different interests, distinguishes the I-It relation to the world of objects and the I-Thou relation in the socio-religious sphere. "The primary word I-Thou can only be spoken with the whole being. The Primary word I-It can never be spoken with the whole being."[32] Emil Brunner entitles a chapter "The Two Conceptions of Truth" and distinguishes "truth" as under-

31. Russell, Bertrand, THE PROBLEMS OF PHILOSOPHY
32. BUBER, M., I AND THOU, p. 3

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stood in rational-empirical terms and "truth" as personal encounter.[33]

It is with this distinction that von Hugel is concerned, especially the I-Thou relation which is the sphere of the mystics' special interest. Although this is never worked out fully in his writings, the tension with which he is dealing and the direction which his thought takes are obvious. Paul Tillich's distinction between "controlling knowledge" and "receiving knowledge" is the finest recent attempt to relate these two types of knowledge.[34] This treatment would fully accord with von Hugel's mystical "element" and can be seen as the explicit of that which was implicit in his writings. According to Tillich's analysis, "The unity of distance and union is the ontological problem of knowledge." Any description of the conflicts of existential cognition must presuppose an understanding of the ontological structure of cognitive reason which makes possible the existential conflicts and manifests itself in the quest for revelation. Knowledge, as a form of union between subject and object presupposes "detachment" or distance. Cognitive distance and cognitive union are the polar elements in the process of cognition. "The element of union and the element of detachment appear in different proportions in the different realms of knowledge. But there is no knowledge without the presence of both elements." "Controlling knowledge" is the type of knowledge predominantly determined by the element of detachment. This can be seen

33. Brunner, E. REVELATION AND REASON, p. 362 f. See also his THE DIVINE-HUMAN ENCOUNTER
34. SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY, Vol. I, pp. 94-105. See also "Realism and Faith" in THE PROTESTANT ERA, pp. 66-82.

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in the positivistic, pragmatic, and empirical approach to objects. Its limitations are most apparent when it seeks to objectify human nature. For, "man resists objectification, and if his resistance to it is broken, man himself is broken." But to know human nature or any individual personality in the past or present necessitates "receiving knowledge" which implies union through emotional participation. Verification differs for each type of knowledge. Controlling knowledge has the advantage of methodological strictness and is tempted to make the experimental method of verification the exclusive pattern. On the other hand, receiving knowledge is experientially verified by the creative union of two natures and "has the advantage that it need not halt and disrupt the totality of the life-process in order to distil calculable elements out of it." The union of these two elements can be seen in the work of physicians, psycho-therapists, educators, social reformers and political leaders who deal with that side of a life-process which is individual, spontaneous and total. "They can work only on the basis of a knowledge which unites controlling and receiving elements. The truth of their knowledge is verified partly by experimental test, partly by a participation in the individual life with which they deal. If this "knowledge by participation" is called "intuition," the cognitive approach to every individual life-process is intuitive. Intuitive in this sense is not irrational, and neither does it by-pass a full consciousness of experimentally verified knowledge."[35] For von Hugel, the

35. Ibid, p. 103

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knowledge of the Reality of God would have been the highest form of "receiving knowledge." This was realized by the apprehending subject through the exercise of the mystical element. But this healing-knowledge was never to be set in opposition to the legitimate use of "controlling knowledge." For him also it was "not irrational, and neither does it by-pass a full consciousness of experimentally verified knowledge."

In tracing the sources and development of von Hugel's epistemological interests and ideas, it remains to note the chief traditions from which he claimed inspiration. It was his habit, whenever possible, to find help and seek for confirmation of his views in some solidly established tradition of the past and in some vigorous stream of contemporary thought. This was especially possible in the development of his Critical Realism.

Looking to the past, von Hugel found an ally in the Moderate Realism of the High Middle Ages. In the Medieval debate over the status of Universals Roscellinus, the Canon of Compiegne, about 1090, was the advocate of extreme nominalism. According to him, universals are mere names, vocis flatus, and only particular things have real existence. At the opposite extreme William of Champeaux, a professor at Paris and later Bishop of Chalons about 1120, developed the extreme consequences of realism.[36] According to this position, nothing is real but the universal; individuals are mere names. Between these two positions of universale post

36. The term "realist" then meant the direct opposite of modern usage. It stood for what we now call "idealist." This inversion of meaning is also seen in the case of "objective" and "subjective."

knowledge of the Reality of God would have been the highest form of "receiving knowledge." This was realized by the apprehending subject through the exercise of the mystical element. But this healing-knowledge was never to be set in opposition to the ultimate use of "controlling knowledge." For him also it was "not irrational, and neither does it by-pass a full consciousness of experimentally verified knowledge."

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Looking to the past, von Hugel found an ally in the Moderate Realism of the High Middle Ages. In the Medieval debate over the status of Universalia Roscellinus, the Canon of Compiegne, about 1090, was the advocate of extreme nominalism. According to him, universals are mere names, vocis flatus, and only particular things have real existence. At the opposite extreme William of Champeaux, a professor at Paris and later Bishop of Chalons about 1120, developed the extreme consequences of realism.[36] According to this position, nothing is real but the universal; individuals are mere names. Between these two positions of universals post

36. The term "realism" then meant the direct opposite of modern usage. It stood for what we now call "idealism." This inversion of meaning is also seen in the case of "objective" and "subjective."

rem and universale ante rem there was ample room for doctrines of mediation. One of these was the conceptualism of Peter Abelard which, while closer to Roscellinus, maintained that the universal exists in the individual and only in the form of a concept apart from the individual. Closer to William of Champeaux was the moderate realism of Thomas Aquinas. In him the concrete idealism of Aristotle modified the abstract idealism of Plato. Thomas, as the great Medieval harmonizer and synthesizer, felt the force of nominalists, realists and conceptualists alike and formulated a solution in which the universals exist before the particulars, in the particulars and after the particulars. In contemporary thought, a naive realist would be the heir of nominalism. The various idealist schools of thought are descendants of the medieval "extreme realists." A critical realist has kinship with a Medieval "moderate realist." Kant and Borden Parker Bowne have sometimes been classified as "modern conceptualists."

Von Hugel's indebtedness to St. Thomas is acknowledged in his Introduction to THE REALITY OF GOD where he discusses the question of the possibility of growth in insight in these matters beyond the light of the great thinkers of the past. He states: "We shall, I think, in this way find half of the double inquiry which fills our first section to go right back to the golden age of Medieval Christian thinking, but to have received an immense accession of precise application and detailed insight within no more than the last seventy years or so."[37] He finds in St. Thomas a clear understanding of the

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fact that the rationality of the visible universe is not a fancy of ours conferred upon it, but a real quality characteristic of itself. For this to come with full force it may be necessary for the human mind to "get through the various plausibilities of the supposed mere human projection, mere hypothetical construction of a rational universe."[38] But the mind must somehow appropriate this insight so clearly expressed in the writings of St. Thomas. He believed that in modern times it was Charles Darwin who, by lifelong observation and endless ingenuity of research, had done most to enlarge our sense of this world which environs us and answers indefinitely to our desire to penetrate and know it. All this is well in line with St. Thomas and "has only got beyond him in the variety and persistance of its application." Similarly, his insight into the need of sense stimulation for the full and average life of the human mind, and even its most spiritual certainties, is of paramount importance. But here again, Kant has produced certain necessary discriminations in his analysis of the rational and mental processes which order and collate experience. These enhance but do not destroy the work of St. Thomas. In the cases of both Darwin and Kant it is necessary to pass beyond the level of their skepticism to discover the value of their amplifications and applications.

Along with the tradition of Medieval "moderate realism" von Hugel found in the contemporary realist reaction to idealism a more adequate epistemological basis for his religious purpose. The precursor of this movement was Thomas

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With the intricacies and vissisitudes of this movement von Hugel was not especially concerned. He claimed only the most generally accepted positions as a suitable framework for descriptions of religious apprehension. In some of its modest representatives critical realism eschewed all metaphysical alliances. James B. Pratt could write: "For critical realism does not pretend to be a metaphysics. It is perfectly possible for the critical realist to be a pan-psychist, a metaphysical dualist, a Platonist, or an ontological idealist of some other type. Only so much of the metaphysical problem need critical realists be agreed upon as is required by the epistemological doctrine which they hold in common . . . . as to any exhaustive knowledge of the inner and ultimate nature of these non-human entities, critical realism is willing to admit itself ignorant, and,

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Nevertheless, he found it useful to appropriate the major tenets of the realist movement. Chief among these were the following: (1) The object itself is apprehended by the mind without being contained within the mind. (2) The nature of the object, while not apprehended exhaustively by the mind, is grasped with varying degrees of comprehension. (3) The object need not give up its integrity of content in order to be sufficiently accessible to mind to insure such degrees of comprehension. His most important single source of help was Norman Kemp Smith, whose thought in turn was influenced by his monumental studies of Kant and the New Realism of Moore, Whitehead and Alexander. Von Hugel shared Smith's conclusion that "we never experience the Divine sheerly in and by itself," rather "we experience the Divine solely through and in connection with what is other than the Divine." Even as in our experience of other selves this is not independently of bodily actions, but as immediately as we experience ourselves.[41]

The limited use which von Hugel made of his indebtedness to these traditions will be seen in the remaining sections of

40. Pratt, J. B., in ESSAYS IN CRITICAL REALISM, p. 109
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III. The Components of Von Hugel's Epistemology

To systematize that which von Hugel himself refused to systematize would lead to dangerous falsification. Nevertheless, it will be conducive to further clarification to arrange seriately the foundational principles upon which his epistemology was based.

1. Those objects of which in experience we are most persistently and resistantly aware are real and transcend the subject.

This is his realist presupposition which he shares with the "common man" and can best be defended by showing the inadequacies of competing idealist theories. "Whether or not real objects themselves possess the properties we apprehend as we apprehend them, those objects must assuredly possess real qualities, which whether or not they are different from these our apprehensions, occasion these differences in us."[42] Nor is this presupposition simply an academic postulate with little or no consequence for life. In THE REALITY OF GOD he describes the "enormous difference" it makes whether one confronts life with this or subjectivist habits of mind.

> Of course, I do not for a moment claim that the religious certitudes are just neither more nor less than those in geology or psychology or history. I only maintain that it makes an enormous difference whether we come to religion with the habit of admitting and rejoicing in realities distinct from ourselves in all the other subject-matters which we love, or if we come to the study of religion with subjectivist habits of mind. Thus, for instance, nothing is more common now than to inquire how we, who do not really know any reality,

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whatsoever, how such blind beetles can know God.[43]

2. Reality as a whole has levels of differing value characterized by differing methods of apprehension.

For von Hugel it was axiomatic that "the last reality for us men to reach with any full analysis is always the first, not only in worth, but in existence and in operation."[44] The scale of being, ranging from a rock crystal, to daisies, to dogs, to men and to God -- the Supreme Reality -- reveals a parallel between the richness and the value of the object and the complexity and obscurity of our knowledge of it. Like Aristotle he emphasized the irrationality of expecting greater clearness than the nature of the subject under consideration permitted. For abstractions, spatial, numerical and mechanical relations "clearness and ready transferableness" were appropriate tests. On the other hand, for truth concerning existences and realities "fruitfulness and vividness (richness)" were demanded. "Nothing is more certain than that the richer is any reality, the higher in the scale of being, and the more precious our knowledge of it, the more in part obscure and inexhaustible, the less immediately transferable, is our knowledge of that reality."[45] This represents the basis of his discrimination of "two kinds of knowledge" which we have referred to as controlling knowledge and uniting knowledge. While he would strongly insist that we have a more adequate apprehension of God than we do of a pebble or a plant or a star, he was anxious to distinguish the method of knowing which characterized the mystic and

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3. Spirit is apprehended through Sense; the Abiding through the Contingent; the Supernatural through the Natural.

Von Hugel's sub-title to THE REALITY OF GOD is indicative of his belief in the interrelation of Sense and Spirit in the knowing process, especially in relation to religious knowledge: "Concerning the Reality of Finites and the Reality of God: a Study of their Inter-relations and their Effects and Requirements within the Human Mind." In the Introduction he informs his readers that "the ceaseless contention and implication of this long book is, in its degree and character, that it is in the contact, as close and penetrating as possible, with the concrete, with history, with institutions, with social groups, that men are most fully awakened to and steadied in the sense of the Unconditioned, the Abiding, the Prevenient, the Beginning and the End and Crown of light and life and love."[47] While it was necessary to distinguish between sense-stimulations and impressions on the one hand, and mental presentations and convictions on the other, the latter could only be awakened through the former. On a profounder ethical level the same twin-fact could be observed;

46. E&A I, pp. 11, 12
47. RG, p. 18

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the deep difference between sense and soul, and yet the need that the soul has for sense, especially for its purification. The Christian doctrine of the Incarnation is the symbol of this incomprehensible but profoundly relevant fact. Christianity can never be interpreted as a doctrine of laws and principles of the spiritual life, with vivid pictures of apparently historical scenes and persons, not one of which need have any factual, happened reality. This might be attempted in Exclusive Mysticism, but never in any form of "Christian Mysticism." Rather, the central conviction of Christianity is the prevenience and condescension of the real God -- "the penetration of spirit into sense, of the spaceless into space, of the eternal into time, of God into man . . . . the lower is here the occasion -- for us poor men, in this our little dispensation, the necessary occasion -- is the nidus, springboard, material, vehicle of the higher and the highest. The higher bends down to, attracts, the lower; the lower rises on tip-toe towards, thirsts after, and finds and wills the higher."[48]

Von Hugel's justification of the institutional element has already been seen to stem from this principle of his epistemology. There is neither pure spirituality nor pure corporeality, but always that unity of body-mind or spirit-body in which both are mutually implicated and functionally related. Thus he can relate his epistemology and institutionalism in the Preface to ETERNAL LIFE:

> Yet all sane and full Epistemology . . . . demand(s) . . . . some genuine institutionalism . . . . If man's spirit is awakened by contact with the things of sense,

48. E&A II, pp. 106,107

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> and if his consciousness of the Eternal and the Omnipresent is aroused and (in the long run) sustained only by the aid of Happenings in Time and Space, then the Historical, Institutional, Sacramental must be allowed a necessary position and function in the full religious life. No cutting of the knots however difficult, no revolt against, no evasion of abuses however irritating or benumbing, are adequate solutions. Only the proper location, the heroic use, the wise integration of the Institutional within the full spiritual life are really sufficient.[49]

4. Reality is incomprehensible and indefinitely apprehensible.

This, von Hugel holds, is true of all realities and truths which deserve and claim our assent and practice, but is especially true of our own souls and eminently true of God -- the Supreme Reality.[50] In this principle he seeks to formulate the "rich middle position" between Gnosticism and Agnosticism. This yields "an admittedly ever unfinished movement, tension, twilight and mixture of knowledge and ignorance -- of a knowledge truly of reality, yet ever inadequate to such reality -- a knowledge ever partial, yet increasable."[51] Thus, his view is "creaturely" compared to the doctrinaire empiricists and dogmatic compared to the skeptics.

Von Hugel's effort to relate mystery and meaning is also revealed in this formula. The mystic does not shun that which is incomprehensible; rather he is characterized by a "delighted acquiescence in mystery."[52] Nevertheless, he sees more than mere flux, mere chance, or sheer mystery. "On the contrary, though nowhere can we exhaust the sig-

49. EL, pp. xiv,xv
50. SL, p. 71
51. RG, p. 195
52. See Kroner, Richard, CULTURE AND FAITH, pp. 185-190

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The mystics, as a group, have more frequently succumbed to the temptation of Gnosticism than to Agnosticism. In spite of the Negative Theology (which will be treated more fully in the following chapter,) which is basically a higher affirmation and not an agnostic principle, the mystics are prone to claim more for their knowledge of God than experience warrants. They bear vigorous witness to God as "increasingly apprehensible" but are consistently checked from within their own ranks lest they trespass the "incomprehensibility" of God. St. John of the Cross speaks for those who see the necessity of testing mystic claims when he says: "I am terrified by what passes among us in these days. Anyone who has barely begun to meditate, if he becomes conscious of these words during his self-recollection, pronounces them forthwith to be the work of God, and says, 'God has spoken to me' or 'I have had an answer from God.'

53. RG, p. 110
54. Ibid, p. 187

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But it is not true: such an one has only been speaking to himself. Besides, the affection and desire for these words cause them to reply to themselves and then to imagine that God has spoken."[55] Critical mystics have, therefore, devised numerous tests for the validity of the knowledge claimed. Richard of St. Victor lays down the test of coincidence with Scripture. Jacob Boehme adds to this the test of "the light of nature." St. Catherine of Genoa states that "no more is shown to the soul than is necessary for leading it to perfection." St. Francis de Sales insists that ecstasy must produce the "ecstasy of a holy, pure living."[56] The following tests for mystical experience, evolved in the history of Western Mysticism, were used by von Hugel. (a) Do subsequent experiences of the same individual confirm this content? (b) Do reliable witnesses under similar conditions produce a similar report? [57] (c) Do these apprehensions bear out and sharpen the dim experience possessed by all mankind?[58] (d) Is this apprehension related positively to the highest standards yet attained by man?[59] (e) Has this experience illuminated or extended knowledge and fruitful action beyond the experience itself?[60] While none of these singly would prove sufficient, their combination would adequately test the Gnostic temptations of mystics and render a degree of confirmation which would compare favorably with man's knowledge of other levels of reality.

5. The knowing process is always simultaneously ex-

55. Quoted in Macintosh, D. C., THE PROBLEM OF RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE, pp. 35, 36
56. Ibid, p. 34
57. E&A I, p. 38
58. MER II, pp. 331-332, 355; EL, p. 382
59. EL, pp. 154, 155
60. MER I, p. 45; E&A I, pp. 51, 52

But it is not true: <u>each on one has only been speaking to himself.</u> Besides, the affection and desire for these words cause them to reply to themselves and then to imagine that God has spoken."[55] Critical mystics have, therefore, devised numerous tests for the validity of the knowledge claimed. Richard of St. Victor lays down the test of coincidence with Scripture. Jacob Boehme adds to this the test of "the light of nature." St. Catherine of Genoa states that "no more is shown to the soul than is necessary for leading it to perfection." St. Francis de Sales insists that ecstasy must produce the "ecstasy of a holy, pure living."[56] The following tests for mystical experience, evolved in the history of Western Mysticism, were used by von Hugel. (a) Do subsequent experiences of the same individual confirm this content? (b) Do reliable witnesses under similar conditions produce a similar report? (c) Do these apprehensions bear out and sharpen the dim experience possessed by all mankind? (d) Is this apprehension related positively to the highest standards yet attained by many?[59] (e) Has this experience illuminated or extended knowledge and fruitful action beyond the experience itself?[60] While none of these singly would prove sufficient, their combination would adequately test the Oneness temptations of mystics and render a degree of confirmation which would compare favorably with man's knowledge of other levels of reality.

55. The knowing process is always simultaneously ex-

55. Quoted in Mcintosh, D. C., THE PROBLEM OF RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE, pp. 35, 36
56. Ibid, p. 34
57. HEA I, p. 28
58. HEH II, pp. 332-332, 355; HL, p. 382
59. HL, pp. 154, 155
60. HEH I, p. 45; HEA I, pp. 51, 52

perience of the subject, object and the overbridging thought.

In his treatment of Kant's epistemology in ETERNAL LIFE, von Hugel indicates the three factors of the knowing process: "All Knowledge is thus ever a trinity of Subject, Object, and the subject's Knowing which simultaneously includes knowledge of the Object and of itself, the Subject. We do not know the Thing-in-itself, in the sense that we know nothing exhaustively, and that we do not, of course, know the Thing as outside our Knowledge of it. But we do know the Thing in our Knowledge of it, and we there know it without further mediation."[61] This is von Hugel's method of stating the paradox of apprehension. Knowledge can only be acquired through human effort and activity but such knowledge cannot be reduced to that activity. The objective element is the source of the stimulation to the initial effort and the sustaining power in subsequent energization. Unless we are willing to do a doctrinaire violence to the undeniable facts of our consciousness we must always give full recognition to the interplay of stimulus, threshold of reception, and the resulting stimulation, without reducing one to the other.

In the knowledge gained through mystical experience, the religious Object--God--is given priority in the relationship as the "Acting Subject." The manner in which the religious object becomes visible to human insight is termed by von Hugel, "revelational." It is always the outcome of the objective factor, and is the self-disclosing of its "givenness." Thus, the objective factor markedly outweighs

61. EL, p. 153. See also MER II, p. 114 for relation of subject and object in the knowing process.

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the subjective. But the correlate of the revelation on the subjective side is self-evidence or the immediate discernment of the self-revealing reality. The mode of apprehending the religious object is always inadequate to it. Nevertheless, although not clear and distinct and frequently dim and obscure, the apprehension is none the less certain on that account.

Von Hugel's attempt to include the valid, if limited, function of the subject in the knowing process frequently left him open to the charge of voluntarism. While it is true that his is "no narrow pietism, blind voluntarism, or easily-satisfied pragmatism"[62] and that his later writings lay less stress on the apprehending subject and more on the "self-disclosing object," this strain does run through his entire writings. In 1894 he seeks to hold "with all philosophers that acts of the understanding are the necessary antecedents and conditions of acts of the will" yet he insists on taking sides with the Scotists "who make the soul's culminating action and happiness to consist specifically in acts of the will, of love consequent upon the sight . . . . The soul's supreme perfection and happiness would reside in the will and would be moral."[63] The genius of Christianity is interpreted as "the supremacy of Love over knowledge, and of Action over speculation."[64] Douglas Steere concludes his treatment of von Hugel's critical realism with the observation that he remained essentially a voluntarist. "Although he was merciless in his criticism of the weaknesses

62. Dakin, A. H., op. cit., p. 21, footnote 1.
63. "The Church and the Bible" in The Dublin Review, Oct. 1894, pp. 317-319
64. E&A II, p. 14. See voluntarist trends in SL, pp. 71,72 and LN, p. xv (about 1919)

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of the voluntaristic group within Catholic Modernism, there is much to indicate that in the end he had never become wholly emancipated from its early influence upon him. In the last analysis, the deeper reason and will were at one with each other. When pressed to the limit, it is the mystic and voluntaristic element in religion that must direct and interpret the intellectual and scientific, the institutional and historical elements even though there is the most impressive attempt on his part to maintain these latter two elements as possessing independent integrity. For at last the will is the seat of their functions. It would not do to press this indication too far, but any searching criticism cannot escape the impact of its weight."[65] Nevertheless, Steere is careful to distinguish von Hugel from his Modernist associates. "But, if this element was large it must be said that in him the intellectual and historical elements were given a distinctly greater share of independence than in that of the Catholic Modernist group. It was a voluntarism in the process of transition to a realist type of intellectualism where the intellect is regarded as necessarily being in closest association with the will as the condition of the apprehension of religious reality."[66]

The importance von Hugel gives to the "interpretative subject" in mystical apprehension distinguishes his "critical" realism from the "naive" realism in which most sympathetic expressions of mysticism are couched. In D. C. Macintosh's classification von Hugel is a representative of "Critical Monistic Realism in Religion" as over against

65. Steere, D., op. cit., pp. 308, 309
66. Ibid, p. 309

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the naive "Extreme Monistic Realism" of the mystic tradition generally.[67] In a critical realism the Divine Reality variously apprehends and is increasingly apprehended by the subject, but in such a way and with such an admixture of the subjective paraphernalia of apprehension or incidental accompaniments that not all that is experienced is to be taken as revelation of the independently existing God. At the same time, not all that is crowded out of consciousness in the mystical state is to be taken as having been shown thereby to be unreal. This is explicitly affirmed by von Hugel in the Introduction to THE REALITY GOD: "Realism, properly and critically understood, assuredly does not mean that the apprehensions, however certain they may seem, of any one of us, straight away, and without modification or addition, adequately render reality of any kind. It only means that, in spite of the usual presence of error and illusion, there is some real, dim knowledge of reality, more or less rightly, or at least instructively formulated."[68]

IV. The Mystic Way

In the seventh Book of Augustine's Confessions, after describing his encounters with numerous philosophers, he describes that inward change which led him to "discern and distinguish between presumption and confession; between those who saw whither they were to go, yet saw not the way, and the way that leadeth not to behold only but to dwell in the beatific country."[69] The mystics, as a class,

67. Macintosh, D. C., op. cit., pp. 15-44; 163-180
68. RG, p. 22
69. CONFESSIONS, Bk. VII: xx: 26

have not been reticent in claiming to "have seen and found the way." The mystics of the Christian tradition are no exceptions to this rule. They have frequently produced elaborate and minute descriptions of the Itinerarium mentis in Deum.

In spite of numerous incidental variations there is a striking similarity among the many expositions of "The Mystic Way." One of the first influential systematizers was Hugh of St. Victor who set forth his method in De Contemplatione et ejus speciebus. He formulates the three stages by which man attains the mystical vision of God: (1)cogitation, in which sense precepts are formed; (2)meditation, wherein the concepts are intellectually investigated; and (3)contemplation, in which intuition is employed to search the inner meaning of the concepts. It was Bonaventura, the doctor seraphicus, who combined mathematical precision with poetic instinct in his analysis of "the way." In the prologue to his Incendium Amoris he contends that all science bears upon it the insignia of the Trinity, therefore this triplicity should be especially evident in the spiritual intellect. He lists the three regular stages, or "ways" as: purgation, which leads to peace; illumination, which leads to truth; and perfection, which leads to love. He then proceeds to show how each of these involves a triple method of exercising: meditation, prayer, and contemplation. Each of these methods further involves three degrees of attainment. Theresa of Avila, by means of various schematizations, further elaborates the mystic knowing process. But regardless of the analyist or the age the outcome generally conforms

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to the fundamental triplicity of the via purgativa, the via illuminativa and the via unitiva. Two major emphases are implicit in this schematization: preparation and realization.

Von Hugel's distaste for systematization is nowhere more apparent than in his almost complete ignoring of the traditional mystic scheme. Nevertheless he is not lacking in interest in the emphases which are enshrined in this triad. In the knowledge of God the responding subject is characterized by his "passivity," which is not quiescence or inattention but the state of being "open" and "receptive." The "techniques of realization," therefore, are not the means by which the subject storms the fortress of God, but rather the cathartic disciplines by which the subject is prepared for the self-disclosure of God. The justification for ascetic practices which are consistent with this aim logically follows from his view of the importance of subjective factors in the knowing process.

> We get to know such realities slowly, laboriously, intermittently, partially; we get to know them, not inevitably nor altogether apart from our dispositions, but only if we are sufficiently awake to care to know them, sufficiently humble to welcome them, and sufficiently generous to pay the price continuously which is strictly necessary if this knowledge and love are not to shrink but to grow. We indeed get to know realities, in proportion as we become worthy to know them, -- in proportion as we become less self-occupied, less self-centred, more outward-moving, less obstinate and insistent, more gladly lost in the crowd, more rich in giving all we have, and especially all we are, our very selves.[70]

Asceticism is never an end, but always a means to the training of the soul. As such it includes a necessary detachment from

70. E&A I, p. 104

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certain "goods" as well as "sins." The self-obliterating practices of many scientists are given as illustrations of this detachment.[71] But purification also demands contact with the world. This involves a close relation with the religious experience of others in the past and the present. It is only by mastering the best of the past that there is any possibility of surpassing it. For this reason von Hugel stresses the study of history and the fellowship in Institutional Christianity as necessary purifications and preparations for the via unitiva.[72] The techniques advocated by von Hugel will be found to be much closer to those of Bonaventura than to the "Dark Night of the Senses" advocated by St. John of the Cross. Nevertheless, for mysticism generally and Christian mysticism particularly, the emphasis on "techniques" is subordinate to the emphasis on "realization." For the via unitiva is at once the consummation and the directive force of the whole practice. Von Hugel's treatment of this embraces all that he says concerning personality "in" God and man's relation of dependence and obedience. At this point it will be sufficient to note that his interpretation of "union" is in line with the orthodox description as set forth by Cardinal Richelieu: "The third degree is the via unitiva, this being nothing else but the care which the Christian, cleansed of sin by the via purgativa, enlightened and warmed by the via illuminativa, takes to unite himself to God by perfect love. This gives him a conformity of will with God so that, without in any manner considering himself,

71. MER II, pp. 331, 350, 374-375, 383; EL, p. 135
72. LN, pp. xiv, xv, 29; SL, pp. 200, 201

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The closest von Hugel comes to setting forth his own version of the Mystic Way is in his analysis of the three elements of the religious life and the journey from Institutionalism through Speculation to Mysticism.[74] These elements, or stages, are integrally related to the three constituents of the knowing process as analyzed by von Hugel.[75] The first, in the order of our consciousness and in the degree of its undeniableness, is the element of our actual impressions which register the surrounding flux and constitutes the prerequisite of any real knowledge. The second consists of the organization of these impressions. For, "it is only by means of this whole second element, only through the co-operation of these 'perceptions' and forms of thought, that any kind even of dim feeling of ordered succession or of system, of unity or meaning, is found by our mind in that first element."[76] It is the third element, however, which gives real value to the two previous ones. This is the ethico-mystical element which willingly trusts these intimations of necessity and believes that these necessities of subjective thought are objective as well, and correspond to the necessities of Being. "Thus, here also, at the very source of all our certainty, of the worth attributable to the least or greatest of our thoughts and feelings and acts, we already find the three elements: indubitable sensation, clear thought, warm faith in and through action."[77] The knowledge <u>of</u> God which the mystic

73. TREATISE ON THE PERFECTION OF THE CHRISTIAN, vi (Migne, p. 1039); quoted in More, P. E., THE CATHOLIC FAITH, p.247
74. MER I, pp. 50f, especially pp. 53-55
75. Ibid, pp. 55-57
76. Ibid, p. 56
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obtains is, therefore, in contrast to knowledge about God, a synthetic and intuitive knowledge of reality which neither dispenses with sense and reason nor is identical with their combined activities. "Beyond the senses and beyond the reasoning mind, even though through them and in agreement with them, we establish contact with an Absolute."[78]

Von Hugel's desire to unite what we have called "controlling" and "receiving" elements in the knowledge of God is seen in his conception of "The Mature Man's Special Approaches to Faith."[79] Childhood, whether individual or racial, physical or psychological, is chiefly dependent upon sense and memory in its religious apprehension. This is a pre-intuitive level of unassimilated knowledge. Youth is the stage of dialectic. Here the mind reaches beyond phenomena, questions, argues and draws conclusions. But to fail to advance beyond this level is to be thwarted at an immature stage. It is to be confined to knowledge about God. It gives play to the intellectual element of man; but man is more than intellect. On the other hand, The Mature Man adds the intuitive knowledge of God to the legitimate use of sense and reason. Significantly, for von Hugel the development of this mystical element is the occasion for the energizing of emotional and volitional aspects of personality. The appropriate response of the whole man, therefore, to the self-disclosure of God can be seen in the harmonious integration of these three elements. This represents "the logic

78. Nedoncelle, op. cit., p. 77. See also footnote p. 58 where Nedoncelle sees similarities in von Hugel's "Way" to Pascal's three ways to belief -- custom, reason and inspiration; and contrasts to Comte's three types of explanation -- theological, metaphysical, scientific.

79. MER I, pp. 52, 53

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of the whole personality." Thus, the knowledge of God derived through the use of the intuitive or mystical element is not set in antithesis to reason, even technical or controlling reason. The mystical element becomes irrational only when severed from integration with other elements. But when no such cleavage takes place the knowledge of God comes through the medium of "ecstatic" or "self-transcending" reason.[80]

While von Hugel was anxious to assert that "our knowledge is always wider and deeper than is our science"[81] he was as careful as Recejac to be on "guard against believing that mysticism has anything to do towards completing science, and that it springs from a need to satisfy the rational consciousness in its restless demand for the Unknowable."[82] The knowledge of God gained through intuitive apprehension will not alter the scientific method but it may radically alter the scientist to such a degree that he is able to illuminate and throw into new perspective the scientist's final picture of the universe by breaking up its premature neatness and demanding of philosophy that a more inclusive account be drawn up that would include both the results of science and the content of the mystic's apprehension.

While von Hugel's revision of the mystic way is most suggestive, at this point can be seen one of the best examples of "his unfortunate habit of pausing in his analysis at just that point which needs clearing up."[83] Douglas

80. Tillich, P., SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY, Vol. I, p. 53
81. E&A I, p. 68
82. Recejac, op. cit., p. 46
83. Steere, op. cit., p. 90

80. Tillich, p. 3, SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY, Vol. I, p. 53
81. Ibid, p. 68
82. Hocking, op. cit., p. 46
83. Steere, op. cit., p. 90

Steere speaks of one of the "glaring defects" of von Hugel's philosophy as the absence of a systematic inquiry into the relation of sense perception and of the conceptual processes to the type of apprehension which is involved here. The problem is how this spiritual apprehension could issue from either the senses or from the discursive conceptual function when its content is so alien to the usual content of either.[84] This is, of course, a phase of the problem of the relation of the order of sense and an order of super-sensual reality which impinges upon the sensual sphere which vexed Plato and every profound thinker since his day. The absence of a "solution" in von Hugel's writings is not startling. But for one who so frequently sought to draw evidence from the field of ordinary sense perception for the supernatural order which he believed to be operative there the absence of some inquiry into these interrelations is a noticeable weakness.

It has already been observed that controlling knowledge or "technical reason" is least adequate in dealing with interpersonal relations. Knowledge of persons demands "knowledge by participation" or the intuitive response of the whole man. It follows, then, that descriptions of The Mystic Way will find their best, although still inadequate, analogy in the relationship of persons, especially the relationship of personal love and trust. This has been admirably expressed by William Temple in words which might easily have been expected in one of von Hugel's Essays. "But it is in personal relationships that the inadequacy of Science is most manifest . . . . . "To 'understand' a person is to have that insight into his character and motives which is another aspect of

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It has already been observed that controlling knowledge or "technical reason" is least adequate in dealing with interpersonal relations. Knowledge of persons demands "knowledge by participation" or the intuitive response of the whole man. It follows, then, that descriptions of The Mystic Way will find their best, although still inadequate, analogy in the relationship of persons, especially the relationship of personal love and trust. This has been admirably expressed by William Temple in words which might easily have been excerpted in one of von Hügel's Essays. "But it is in personal relationships that the inadequacy of science is most manifest . . . . . "To 'understand' a person is to have that insight into his character and motives which is another aspect of

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what is also called sympathy . . . . The heart of Religion is not an opinion about God, such as Philosophy might reach as the conclusion of its argument; it is a personal relationship with God. Its closest analogy is not found in our study of astronomy or any other science, but in our relation to a person whom we trust and love."[85] The revelation of God to man must be understood on the basis of this analogy.

> The primary fact concerning revelation in its essence is that it is a personal self-disclosure to persons, and has authority as such . . . . The real acceptance of such revelation is not only intellectual assent; it is submission of will. And this must be submission to the revelation as personally received, not only to the record of it as received by some one else. Every revelation of God is a demand, and the way to knowledge of God is by obedience. It is impossible to have knowledge of God as we have knowledge of things, because God is not a thing. We can only know a person by the direct communion of sympathetic intercourse; and God is personal. But besides this He is Creator, so that the communion of man with God is communion of creature with Creator; it is worship and obedience, or else it does not exist. God is personal; revelation therefore is the self-disclosure of personality to persons.[86]

The knowledge of God must, therefore, be sought along the same avenue by which we seek a deep knowledge of human personality. If God is to open His nature to man through self-disclosure -- revelation -- and man is to open his nature to Him -- receptive response -- this will be analogous to the knowledge gained through the love experience. Von Hugel was careful to guard against the misinterpretation of God as a "person alongisde of other persons." But once admitting the need of purification for any analogy he freely used personal encounter to depict the knowing process.

85. Temple, W., op. cit., p. 54
86. Ibid, p. 354

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[86]. Ibid, p. 315

> Only full trust, only unconditional surrender suffice for religion. But then religion excites and commands this in a person towards a Person; a surrender to be achieved not in some thing, but in some one, -- a some one who is at all, only in as much as he is living, loving, growing; and to be performed, not towards some thing, but towards Some One, whose right, indeed whose very power to claim me, consists precisely in that He is Himself absolutely, infinitely and actually, what I am but derivatively, finitely and potentially.[87]

Such knowledge as is derived through the "Divine-Human Encounter" demands a form of "Realism" when given philosophical expression. For "the true metaphysic of love is realism. For love demands the distinctiveness of lovers; God, the reality most worthy of our love, is also the reality which is most independent of our knowledge."[88]

The nature of the knowledge gained through mystical apprehension and its communication differ from all other types of knowledge. Even as the richness and uniqueness of each human love experience stands in sharp contrast to the prosaic sameness of the descriptions of such an experience so, even more, does the fruitfulness of the mystic apprehension stand in contrast to the "ineffability" of his would-be reports. William James calls this the handiest of the marks which distinguish the mystic state. "The subject of it immediately says that it defies expression, that no adequate report of its contents can be given in words. It follows from this that its quality must be directly experienced; it cannot be imparted or transferred to others."[89] But, in spite of this ineffability, the mystics have been the most voluminous writers and incessant talkers. Nevertheless a similar sameness characterizes their reports as

87. MER I, pp. 72, 73
88. Nedoncelle, op. cit., p. 78
89. James, W., VARIETIES OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE, p. 371

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does the reports of human love. The nucleus of the report of Western Mystics' apprehension is that reality is accessible, that it is at bottom one, that it is good, and that it is indefinitely richer than man's highest achievements in harmony and love but affirms their direction to be of its own nature. But the fruitfulness of the mystic's apprehension cannot be guaged by its communicable contents. Even as von Hugel described the knowing process as "revelational" the type of knowledge derived could be called "relational." Its value would consist in its ability to "intuit" the nature and purpose of the self-disclosing God and in the harmonious alignment of the human will with the Divine. As such, this knowledge could produce its own certainty of the Reality which was apprehending as well as being apprehended; it could energize the subject with courage, honesty and persistence in seeking to understand and constructively work in the world in which it lived; it could provide a more adequate perspective for the science and philosophy of its time; it could occasion creativity by enabling the subject to develop new syntheses of existing materials; it could lead to humility which is "teachableness" in the intellectual sphere and a precondition of growth; above all it could call forth the awe and adoration which are appropriate and essential in the face of such an environing Reality. William James has pointed out that the knowledge derived through mystical apprehension can be authoritative for the individual who is the receiving subject but for no one else.[90] Most mystics would agree that their reports were

90. Ibid, pp. 414 f.

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in the very nature of the case "witness" and "invitation." Nevertheless, the similar reports of many witnesses greatly separated by time and place, not all of whom can be relegated to the ranks of the untrustworthy, give an element of objectivity which demands serious consideration and would compare favorably with the confirmation accorded to other types of knowledge.

Although von Hugel vigorously contended for an overplus in the intuitive knowledge of God which could not be subsumed under the activity of sense perception and technical reason, he vehemently denied the presence of a distinct faculty of mystical apprehension.[91] In fact, he believed "that all the errors of the Exclusive Mystic proceed precisely from the contention that Mysticism does constitute such an entirely separate, completely self-supported kind of human experience."[92] This denial did not mean that von Hugel was insensitive to the vast differences in the recollective and intuitive element among various souls nor that congenital differences could not be so developed as to appear as strikingly divergent. It did mean that "the most purely contingent-seeming soul" has <u>some</u> sense and experience of the Infinite, evidenced by at least some dissatisfaction with the finite, except as this finititude is an occasion for growth in, and a part expression of, that Infinite. At the same time "the most exclusively mystical-seeming soul" depends even for his mystical apprehension upon its past and present contacts with the contingent, temporal,

91. MER II, pp. 283, 284
92. Ibid, p. 283

spatial and social facts and elements. The history of mysticism abounds with such designations as "the divine spark," "the spark of the soul," "the Inner Light," "the apex of the Mind," and "the ground of the soul" which have frequently been construed as a distinct mystical organ.[93] Dangerous as such a claim can be, these designations frequently seek to express two of the presuppositions of von Hugel's epistemology. Negatively, human reasoning or the discursive faculty is inadequate in itself to apprehend the religious Object; and positively, this designation witnesses to man's inextricable relation to the trans-subjective Reality which impinges upon him at every moment.

Von Hugel could segregate "The Mystics" into a special class only with great difficulty. He preferred to see mysticism in its true, full dignity as being precisely "not everything in any one soul, but something in every soul of man." Those usually given separate classification present "at its fullest, the amplest development, among certain special natures with the help of certain special graces and heroisms, of what, in some degree and form, is present in every truly human soul, and in such a soul's every, at all genuine and complete, grace-stimulated religious act and state."[94] Father Tyrrell, who was von Hugel's closest confidant on this particular phase of the subject, states that the difference between the Saint (who incorporates the fullest development of the mystical element in harmony with other elements) and "the ordinary Christian" is "that be-

93. Herman, THE MEANING AND VALUE OF MYSTICISM, pp. 21f
28, 245-282
94. MER II, p. 284

tween inceptive love and perfect love; between the seed and the flower." He adds that "because there is a real continuity and sameness of kind, the Saint is intelligible to us in that which is the very essence of his sanctity."[95] To the same Tyrrell von Hugel wrote these words which would especially apply to the full energizing of the mystical element: "The true exceptional is thus never the queer, but the supremely normal, and but embodies, in an exceptional degree, the deepest, and hence exceptional longings of us all."[96]

While it is not unjust to say that in von Hugel's writings there is a "lack of a detailed, technical epistemology" and that he "never scrutinized his own realism too closely"[97] such contributions as we do find are nevertheless illuminating. From the standpoint of a study of mysticism they provide a valuable prolegomenon to his doctrine of God. In terms of his contribution to the philosophy of religion he has made a constructive attempt to utilize critical realist philosophy for religious purposes and to keep the valid testimony of the mystic apprehension of the religious object before those who sought to give an at all complete picture of the knowing process. Douglas Steere concludes his treatment of von Hugel's epistemology with the following summary: "He has brought to light the objective element in mystical apprehension and has shown its susceptibility to the critical realist's interpretation. On the other hand, he has pointed the way to a possible synthesis between a critical realism in the sensory field,

95. Tyrell, G., THE FAITH OF THE MILLIONS, p. 261. See also pp. 280, 281 for his treatment of Protestant misunderstanding of Roman Catholicism at this point.
96. SL, p. 72
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which would concern itself with the evidences of the physical world registered there; and of mystical apprehension, which would seek to grasp the background of those same perceptions in a vivid, if rough and general way. He has challenged critical realism to apply its tests with equal vigor to the evidence which both of these apprehensional sources send in. He has insisted that it must eventually build up its world view on a consideration of the evidence for the nature of things supplied by not one, but both of these supplementary forms of apprehension. In this would seem to rest his major contribution to the philosophy of religion of his day."[98]

98. Steere, op. cit., pp. 309, 310

CHAPTER FOUR

THE GOD OF MYSTICAL APPREHENSION

I. "God Is A Stupendously Rich Reality."

II. "God Is The Author Of Nature And Supernature." (Time and Eternity)

III. "God Alone Is Fully Free."

IV. "God Is The Supreme Good."

V. "God Is Other Than Man."

VI. "We Need God More And Differently From The Way God Needs Us."

VII. "The Prevenience Of God."

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Walter Marshall Horton in selecting von Hugel as one of his two spokesmen for "The God of Christian Faith" in his THEISM AND THE MODERN MOOD has justified his choice by rightly distinguishing the Baron's "Doctrine of God" from the great theological systems which he might have utilized. He believed that, for his purpose, the mind of the "great Catholic layman whom his friends unanimously regarded as a saint" and "himself a practicing mystic" was considerably more fruitful than the mind of theologian, "with its demand for logical consistency and

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its preoccupation with the intellectual issues of the day" and which is "constantly in danger of devitalizing the faith it is trying to defend."[1] While writing as a philosopher of religion this striking quality of "spiritual explorer" so colors both the form and the content of his treatments of the nature of God that this fact must be recognized if his contributions are to be understood in the proper light. To explicate the nature of God, von Hugel will draw heavily upon Scripture and the subsequent work of theologians and mystics. But the "traditional testimonies" are to be used, not piously repeated. Tradition is to be reinterpreted in the light of personal experience and this experience is necessary in order to construe the tradition. It was his unusual ability to penetrate to the inner significance of this collective testimony which led Horton to say,"A great weight of authority therefore attaches to the criticisms which he passed on contemporary theology -- far more than attaches to any papal encyclical or other official pronouncement."[2]

Rather than impose an arbitrary organization upon the thought of von Hugel, it is conducive to clarity and the "feel" of his thought to appropriate an outline which he himself used in an address in 1921. Therefore, the seven "facts and doctrines concerning God which are of especial importance in the life of prayer" will constitute the framework and subdivisions of the present chapter.[3]

1. Horton, W. M., THEISM AND THE MODERN MOOD, pp. 146-148
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I. "God Is A Stupendously Rich Reality."

The contemplation of the inexhaustible plentitude of the Divine Being would immediately evoke the response of an awed silence in von Hugel. While in time he would say or write much concerning the nature of this Ground of Being who is also a "personalist Other," his first and last word was the confession of the stupendous richness of God. Like St. Paul he had a vivid sense of "the depth of the wealth both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God! How inscrutable His judgements, how trackless His footsteps!"[4] The very idea of attempting to comprehend God was like trying to mop up the ocean with a sponge.[5] Nevertheless, here especially, one realized the truth of the epistemological principle that Reality was incomprehensible but indefinitely apprehensible. This was supremely true of the knowledge of God. "Indeed God <u>is</u> beyond our noblest and deepest conceptions, yet He is beyond them in their direction, He is indefinitely nobler and deeper than them all."[6] Nor was the primitive apprehension restricted to the bare existence of God without some, however dim and obscure, sense of <u>what</u> He was. Von Hugel was pleased to be able to find confirmation for this in St. Thomas who usually elaborates a position which ignores and would logically exclude such a "confused knowledge." In St. Thomas' EXPOSITION AND QUESTIONS ON THE BOOK OF BOETIUS ON THE TRINITY, after arguments to show that we know indeed <u>that</u> God is, but not <u>what</u> He is, -- at most only what He

4. Romans 11: 33 (Weymouth)
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6. E&A II, p. 181

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is not, he says: "We should recognize, however, that it is impossible, with regard to anything, to know whether it exists, unless, in some way or other, we know what it is, either with a perfect or with a confused knowledge . . . . Hence also with regard to God, -- we could not know whether He exists, unless we somehow knew what He is, even though in a confused manner."[7] Nor does this sense of awe before the infinite richness of God diminish with the fuller development of the religious life, particularly in the exercise of the mystical element. Rather it expands. This is borne out by the assertion of St. John of the Cross that the beatified soul has the most sensitive appreciation for God's incomprehensibility and those who have the less clear vision do not perceive as distinctly as the others how greatly He transcends their vision.[8] Thus, von Hugel was careful to guard against the equating of this sense of awe, which was derived from the vivid apprehension of the greatness of the Reality, with any sense of uncertainty as to the existence and the supernuman nature of the Reality underlying and occasioning this apprehension. "Healthy mysticism and genuine scepticism are thus intrinsically opposites."[9]

In the Christian tradition there are two symbols which have especially witnessed to God as the stupendously rich Reality. The first of these is the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. In spite of some of its questionable uses with its seemingly Pantheistic insistence upon substance in the Trinity it has also served as a preservative against senti-

7. IN LIBRUM BOETII DE TRINITATE, in D. Thomae Aquinatis Opera, ed. altera Veneto, Vol. VIII, 1776, pp. 341 b 342 a. Quoted in MER II, p. 288.
8. MER II, p. 51; E&A I, p. 39
9. E&A I, p. 40

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mental humanism.[10] When conceived as Lover, Loved and Love, the manifoldness in unity accurately depicts the richness of the inner life of God as "something far fuller and richer than is the whole of His creative and providential activity."[11] God is thus known as "The Living God," the Source of Being, who knows neither absolute nor qualified dependence upon creation or creatures.

The second symbol is that of the "Negative Theology" which has played such a prominent role in the mystic tradition. This largely stemmed, in Western thought, from Plotinus who said, "We say what if is not: what it is, we do not say."[12] Von Hugel was not one to commit the genetic fallacy and rule it out because of its non-Christian origin. It has maintained its place in Christian thought because of the necessity of criticizing every analogy or predicate applied to God. In itself it is not an agnostic principle but a witness to a higher affirmation. In the negative propositions of the Mystical Theology of Pseudo-Dionysius, such as "God is not Being, not Life," there is presupposed the affirmative position that God is Being and Life in a manner infinitely more sublime and perfect than we are able to comprehend. This use of the Negative Theology can be seen in the writings of St. Catherine of Genoa and St. John of the Cross. Our most refined predicates and precise analogies fall hopelessly short of God, not because He is a-moral, but because He is the infinite spread of the "clues whose end we hold in our hand but which extend altogether beyond our grasp or even our vision."[13]

10. E&A I, p. 277
11. RG, p. 66
12. ENNEADS, VI, 9, 3
13. Watkin, E. I., PHILOSOPHY OF MYSTICISM, p. 63

mental humanism.[10] When conceived as Lover, Loved and Love, the manifoldness in unity accurately depicts the richness of the inner life of God as "something far fuller and richer than is the whole of His creative and providential activity."[11] God is thus known as "The Living God," the Source of Being, who knows neither absolute nor qualified dependence upon creation or creatures.

The second symbol is that of the "Negative Theology" which has played such a prominent role in the mystic tradition. This largely stemmed, in Western thought, from Plotinus who said, "We say what it is not: what it is, we do not say."[12] Von Hugel was not one to commit the genetic fallacy and rule it out because of its non-Christian origin. It has maintained its place in Christian thought because of the necessity of criticizing every analogy or predicate applied to God. In itself it is not an agnostic principle but a witness to a higher affirmation. In the negative propositions of the Mystical Theology of Pseudo-Dionysius, such as "God is not Being, not Life," there is presupposed the affirmative position that God is Being and Life in a manner infinitely more sublime and perfect than we are able to comprehend. This use of the Negative Theology can be seen in the writings of St. Catherine of Genoa and St. John of the Cross. Our most refined predicates and precise analogies fall hopelessly short of God, not because He is a-moral, but because He is the infinite spread of the "clues whose end we hold in our hand but which extend altogether beyond our grasp or even our vision."[13]

10. RMA I, p. 277
11. HO, p. 66
12. MM/MAPC, VI, 9, 3
13. Watkin, E. I., PHILOSOPHY OF MYSTICISM, p. 63

Von Hugel did not hesitate to press this use of the Negative Theology to the utmost limit -- the "Christ-likeness" of God. While he recognized in Jesus Christ the supreme revelation of God's prevenient love, the normative revelation by which all intimations of the supernatural must be measured, he retained a strong sense "that not even Jesus Christ and His Redemption exhaust God."[14] His fear of the dangers of excessive Christo-centrism can be seen in his criticisms of the Ritchlian, Wilhelm Hermann, whose restriction of the knowledge of God to the knowledge of the Historic Christ both undercut a legitimate base of General Revelation upon which the Special Revelation alone could be received and failed to make the important distinction between the divine depth and the divine logos.[15] In Fenelon's letters to the Carmelite nun, Soeur Charlotte de S. Cyprien, von Hugel saw an admirable illustration of tender devotion to Christ free from the perils of this excessive Christo-centrism.[16] God is, thus, not less than can be seen in Jesus Christ, nor only that, but infinitely richer in this direction.

II. "God Is The Author Of, And God Is Variously Reflected In, All (innocent) Nature As Well As In All Supernature." (Time and Eternity)

Although "the stupendously rich Reality" is not dependent upon creation or creatures this is seen to interpenetrate all natural and temporal existence. The reality of the life of God impinging upon the life of man is set

14. E&A II, p. 218
15. On Hermann: MER II, pp. 263-265, 332-333; "Experience and Transcendence" in Dublin Review, Apr. 1906, p. 366. On the relation of the Creative God to the Absolute: E&A II, p. 206 f. Also Tillich, P., SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY, Vol. I, pp. 250-252.
16. E&A II, p. 218

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16. RRA II, p. 218

forth by von Hugel in his use of the medieval doctrine of God as author of both nature and supernature.

When called upon to do so, von Hugel would vigorously stress man's estrangement as due to his false and rebellious self-centeredness. Sin was neither primarily finiteness nor sensuality, but pride.[17] He looked with suspicion upon the ease with which Christian theologians had appropriated the Neo-Platonic doctrine of "Negative Evil."[18] Nevertheless, in spite of this strain in his thought, he was equally insistent that "the widest and most primitive contrasts here are, not Sin and Redemption (though these, of course, remain), but Nature (however good in its kind) and Supernature."[19]

This conception he appropriated in all its fullness from its fountainhead in the short-lived golden Middle Ages of Aquinas, Dante, Francis of Assisi and Giotto. This was developed upon the fundamental axiom of all the teaching of St. Thomas that "Grace does not abolish Nature, but perfects it." The opposition between the world and the Kingdom of God which characterized the early Christian Ethos, "was retained, but its outlook had entirely changed since the period of the Early Church."[20] In Aquinas "the opposition is rather one between two stages of purpose, between mystical supernature and its blessedness in the future state, on the one hand, and Natural Law in general, on the other hand;

17. MER II, p. 105, E&A II, pp. 236 f
18. MER II, pp. 221, 222, 293-296; E&A I, p. 214
19. E&A I, p. 88; see also E&A I, pp. xv, 280, E&A II, pp. 246, 247.
20. Troeltsch, E., THE SOCIAL TEACHINGS OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCHES, p. 266. Concerning Troeltsch's SOCIALLEHREN: von Hugel believed that nowhere had there been shown a more profound and generous treatment of the doctrine of Nature and Supernature than in "these noble sections of a truly great book."

the difference between the absolute Natural Law of the Primitive State and the relative Natural Law of the state of sin has become comparatively unimportant; both of these ideas are summed up in the term "Nature," and are therefore opposed to Supernature."[21] Thus, God's outward action moves on two levels -- a Good and a Better or Best. There are two kinds, not merely two degrees, of Goodness. "We thus recognize in man's actual life a polarity, a tension, a friction, a one thing at work in distinctly another thing -- like yeast in meal, like salt in meat, like coral insects and whole coral reefs in the huge ocean -- an ocean so different from themselves."[22] Although the impoverished philosophy and thin theology of the later Middle Ages combined with the subsequent developments of the Renaissance and the Reformation to dissipate this "two story" thesis, von Hugel believed the times were overripe for its revival. In once again realizing the importance of this most basic polarity the charm, freshness and freedom which are essential to religion at its best can replace the monotony, dullness, and oppression which result from the priority of the Sin-Grace polarity. Von Hugel believed that, "not the contrast between sin and virtue, but the difference between Nature and Supernature can furnish a solid starting point for the recovery, the resuscitation of religion, as by far the richest, the most romantic, the most entrancing and emancipating fact and life extant or possible anywhere for man."[23]

21. Ibid.
22. E&A II, p. 219
23. E&A I, p. 280. His most extensive treatments of this theme are scattered through the First Series of his ESSAYS AND ADDRESSES.

While von Hugel was not unmoved by the beauties of physical nature, sheer beauty as an end in itself left him cold.[24] He needed and rejoiced in the beauty of mind and soul. Beauty, for him, lay in the perfection of a thing in its degree and kind. It is therefore in his analysis of moral experience that he makes his greatest use of the interpenetration of Nature by Supernature. This alone could provide the foundation of an adequate ethic. The words of A. E. Taylor perfectly express von Hugel's conviction: "In plain language, we break with the presuppositions of the moral life equally whether we eliminate the natural or the supernatural from our conception of things. To think of the moral life adequately, we must think of it as an adventure which begins at one end with nature and ends at the other with supernature."[25]

In writing to his niece von Hugel declared that one of the most insidious and "all-but-irresistible" dangers of religion, which is ever ready to sap its force and lead to "the most destructive counter-excesses," is the tendency to allow the fascinations of Grace to blunt one's appreciation of "the beauties and duties of Nature."[26] But the morality of honest barter, moderate living, the counting-house, the law-courts, the natural virtues of Confucius and Jeremy Bentham represent the stuff of the natural order and are good and of God in their own way.[27] Not only are both nature and supernature from God, "and to

24. Greene, G., TWO WITNESSES, p. 141
25. Taylor, A. E., THE FAITH OF A MORALIST, I. p. 124
26. LN, p. 61
27. E&A I, p. 199

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be loved and honoured as His: but they have been created, they are administered and moved, by God, as closely interrelated parts of one great whole . . . . No Grace without the substrata, the occasion, the material of Nature; and (in the individuals called to the realization of the type) no Nature without Grace." Thus he encourages his niece in the necessary cultivation of interests and activities which are not directly religious. "And this, not simply because, 'why, of course we must eat our dinner; of course, we must have our little relaxations;' but, much more, because, without these not directly religious interests and activities, you -- however slowly and unperceivedly -- lose the material for Grace to work on."[28] This natural level of "the honesties and decencies of average domestic and political life"[29] is symbolized by von Hugel as the level of the "State."

But the moral life of man can neither be described nor confined simply to the natural level. Man's aspirations and dissatisfactions reveal "Intimations of the Supernatural" which everywhere impinge upon and seek to enhance and transform the natural life of man. These intimations are given incidental treatment throughout von Hugel's writings. In THE MYSTICAL ELEMENT he describes that fact which constitutes the specific characteristic of all true humanity; "the sense of mental oppression, of intolerable imprisonment inflicted by the very idea of the merely contingent, the simply phenomenal and Finite, and the accompanying noble restlessness and really dwarfing of man's best achievements by the agents

28. LN, pp. 61, 62
29. E&A II, p. 219

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28. LM, pp. 61, 62
29. MEA II, p. 219

own ideal of Perfection." Man suffers from this as really as from the toothache or insomnia and thus reveals his relationship to "the Spirit, thus directly experienced by their spirit" which "transcends, and yet also is required by and is immanent in, their keen sense of the Finitude and Contingency present throughout the world."[30] Man's restless search for more adequate categories to express his relationship to God is seen to be the result of "the Reality, extant and acting upon and within the world distinct from the human mind, and upon and within those human minds and spirits themselves."[31] Whenever there occur acts of sheer self-surrender in the deepest search and work within the visible and temporal, the contingent and relative, to the Invisible, the Eternal and the Unconditional: "wheresoever such self-surrender is from those temporalities, apprehended as such, to these Eternities, accepted, adored as such: there is the supernatural."[32] The irrepressible oscillation from man and the many to God -- the true Home -- and the One is an "intimation."[33] The unsatisfactoriness of all complete subjectivism is in itself an intimation of the objectively Other. "It is a sheer impossibility in fact and an absurdity in thought that we could even have known subjectivity at all, still less could have felt, or can feel its intolerableness, if we do not, somehow, know objectivity as well."[34] After viewing man's revulsion at the apparent cruelties in nature and the brutalities of human life, von Hugel asks, "where

30. MER II, pp. 281, 282. See also E&A I, p. 208
31. E&A I, p. 45
32. Ibid, p. 198
33. E&A II, p. 221
34. RG, p. 63

30. MER II, pp. 281, 282. See also MEA I, p. 208
31. MEA I, p. 45
32. Ibid, p. 198
33. MEA II, p. 221
34. RO, p. 63

on earth should we get this dismay, this disgust, these temptations to unbelief, except through our being touched by the ultimate Reality, Itself good and purely good?"[35]

In the words of St. Augustine: "God places salt on our tongues so that we thirst for him." Man possesses by Nature both a possible and an actual thirst for God. "This natural capacity for the God of Nature and for all the natural virtues has, however, through God's sheer bounty, been stimulated to beyond its natural awakeness by His own condescensions toward us -- His Incarnation in the life and work of Jesus Christ constituting the centre and fullness of all this ceaseless movement from God to man . . . . We now long for Supernatural Good, Supernatural Beatitude."[36] Through the power of Supernatural Grace the Natural virtues of man are transfigured. Average decency becomes devotedness and homeliness becomes heroism. Justice and fairness are transfigured into genial generosity and overflowing self-devotion. Competition yields to cooperation and even vicarious work and suffering. "And now the desire for a simple survival of the natural activities and of the natural happiness, and of a dim and discursive sense of God, is replaced by thirst for the full expansion and the final establishment of the human personality in an endless life of such self-devotion and of a vivid, intuitive vision of God, supreme Author and End of all Nature and Supernature."[37] In his address, "Christianity and the Supernatural,"[38] the one effort devoted exclusively to this theme, von Hugel

35. Ibid, p. 68
36. E&A I, p. 283
37. Ibid.
38. Ibid, pp. 278 f

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35. Ibid., p. 68
36. Op. cit., p. 283
37. Ibid.
38. Ibid., pp. 278 f

defines and illustrates the sense of the Supernatural in the seven virtues of Courage, Purity, Unlimited Compassion, Humility, Truthfulness, Self-Abandonment and Spiritual Joy or Beatitude. His illustrations of this theme here and in other places are among his finest.[39] Even as the State was the symbol of the life of Nature, so the Church was the symbol of the Supernatural Life. "The State is fanatical the moment it attempts to require or to supply such motives, virtues and consummations; and the Church is an irritating superfluity, a feeble ditto of the State the moment it forgets that this precisely forms its specific work and call: the awakening, the training, the bringing into full life and fruitfulness of the Supernatural Life."[40]

Three discriminations which von Hugel made in his treatment of Supernature are of special importance. He was always careful to distinguish the Supernatural from the Miraculous. He insisted that the Catholic faith had always distinguished three possibilities -- Nature, non-strictly Miraculous Supernature, and Miracle. He traced this in Augustine's Tractatus in Joannem and Fenelon's position against Bossuet. "But we will simply hold with Fenelon that the spiritual life of Prayer, of Love and of Devotedness is, even in its fullest Christian developments, essentially not miraculous but supernatural."[41] This distinction had important consequences for distinguishing true and false mysticism. True mysticism always builds directly upon the supernatural; but not the miraculous.

39. E&A I, pp. 223, 224; 284-291; 297,298
40. Ibid, p. 283
41. Ibid, p. 279. See also Nedoyere, op. cit., p. 334

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False mysticism builds more or less upon the miraculous or even upon the preternatural.

The Supernatural was never to be identified and measured by its conscious, explicit references to Christ or God, but by certain qualities of which heroism, with a keen sense of givenness and of "I could not do otherwise," is the chief. This he learned from W. G. "Ideal" Ward. "Thus a man may perform a truly supernatural act, or be in a genuinely supernatural condition of soul, and yet may possess, at the time or even generally, only the most dim and confused -- a quite inadequate -- theology."[42]

The material of the Supernatural was not only the heroic, but mostly the homely, even as the heroic as well as the homely could provide the material of the Natural. St. Paul described the possibility of performing the homely natural duties, such as eating and drinking, for the glory of God. The same apostle also affirmed the possibility of performing such acts as the distribution of goods and the giving of the body in supposed martyrdom "and yet these acts may remain at the natural level, indeed may become 'splendid' vices, owing to the absence of the supernatural motive or to presence, central and determining, of motives of vanity and pride."[43]

By this means von Hugel sought to depict the distinction and the interrelation of the two spheres and describe the "adventure which begins at one end with nature and ends at the other with supernature." Both must be preserved; neither

42. Ibid, p. 280
43. Ibid, p. 284

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Of one piece with von Hugel's treatment of Nature and Supernature is his analysis of the momentous problem of Time and Eternity. His position seeks to shun the extremes of treating temporal experiences themselves as wholly illusory, as Plotinian mysticism tends to do, or as essentially real, as most modern realism has done.

In the face of the intimacy and omnipresence of the experience of change, the persistent refusal of man, especially the religious man, to regard this universal characteristic of human experience as an ultimate predicate of reality must be regarded as a most remarkable phenomenon. Von Hugel is concerned with this apprehension of "*all* mere

44. E&A II, p. 219
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Succession and Fleetingness," which awakens, and is felt in contrast with, "a sense of Simultaneity and Abidingness, as somehow superior to and normative of, as somehow alone giving dignity and worth to, all that flux and relativity."[46] He saw in the Buddhist observation of the sickening character of all mere change and their longing for Nirvana a magnificent prolegomenon to all religion and a striking effect of "the Real Presence of God also in those men's minds." "It is because they have the dim, inarticulate sense of what the Abiding means that the mere slush of change is so sickening -- a change not of growth, not of full establishment in Faith and Light, but a sheer racket; something fairly like what the evening newspapers of our most enlightened times tend to produce in the minds of their unhappy devotees."[47] Writing to his niece he said: "Now the deepest intimation and requirement we really have got -- though sadly weakened in many of us by the fever and rush of life since about A. D. 1790 -- is Being (as distinct from Becoming), is Perfection (as distinct from Attempting), is indeed Action but not Change. Of course, change in ourselves, in the sense of becoming better and better in all things; but this -- this need of change in us -- comes simply from our imperfection. We are not God. Yet how we need Him! And this, then, not as just our larger ourselves, not as a larger Becoming, but as Being, as Joy Pure and Undefiled."[48]

Following Augustine's description of God's Eternity in Books XI, XII of the CONFESSIONS, von Hugel interprets this

46. EL, p. 154
47. SL, p. 364
48. SL, p. 331

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48. SL, p. 331

phase of the divine nature as contemporaneousness or simultaneity, the "all at once" or "all together" -- totum simul. This simultaneity, however, signifies not an empty form but a maximum of unity in diversity and diversity in unity. God is thus the ground of supreme beauty, absolute truth and perfect goodness. The nature of this Absolute is Pure Being, or pure function or energy, as Actus Purus in the sense of St. Thomas and the schoolmen. Negatively, this means that God is neither process nor evolution nor succession.

In contrast to this simultaneity, von Hugel specifies two types of succession or temporal sequence -- Duration and Clock-Time. Here he follows Bergson's treatment of the duree reele in which he defines Duration as "the continuous progress of the past which gnaws into the future and which swells as it advances."[49] This is time qua experienced in the concrete, the very essence of life and of self-conscious existence. Duration signifies not merely succession, but a perpetual overlapping and interpenetration of temporal moments or meaningful experiences. William James wrote: "The practically cognized present is no knife-edge, but a saddle-back with a certain breadth of its own on which we sit perched, and from which we look in two directions into time. The unit of composition of our perception of time is duration, with a bow and stern, as it were -- a rearward and a forward-looking end. It is only as parts of this duration-block that the relation of succession of one end to the other is perceived."[50] On the other hand, Clock-Time is an auto-

49. CREATIVE EVOLUTION, p. 5
50. PRINCIPLES OF PSYCHOLOGY, Vol. I, pp. 609-610. See also Augustine's analysis of poetry and Pringle-Pattison's "analogy of an artistic whole," IDEA OF GOD, pp. 361f

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matic convention, a mathematical time representable by equidistant points; "the joint product of Duration, which alone is truly experienced, and of Space which alone is clearly picturable."[51] This is the time of science, schedules and social engagements but not the duration of inner experience.

Man in his "durational existence" thus stands at the juncture of eternity and time. He dwells in what Thomas Aquinas calls Aevum. But "Aevum is intermediate between Time and Eternity, participating in each; since, whilst Time has a before and an after," and "Eternity neither has, nor can suffer, a before nor an after," "the Aevum has not," of necessity, "either a before or an after, although they can be conjoined to it." Now "spiritual creatures, as regards their affections and intellections, in which there exists succession, are measured by Time; as regards their natural being, they are measured by the Aevum; and as regards their vision of glory, they participate in Eternity."[52] Man can only be understood by properly assessing this peculiar position. "We are indeed actually touched, penetrated and supported by the purely Eternal; and yet . . . . we ourselves shall never, either here or hereafter, be more than quasi-eternal, durational . . . . Only this double sense will save us from the perilous alternatives of an uncreaturely sheer fixity and an animal flux and change. We thus gain a perennial source of continuity and calm."[53]

51. E&A II, p. 53. On the description and relation of Duration and Clock-Time see also MER I, p. 106; E&A I, pp. 69, 70; E&A II, pp. 53,54; EL, pp. 105-106 231-232, 297-302, 383-391.
52. SUMM. THEOL. 1, qu. x, art. 5, in corp. et ad 1. Quoted in EL, pp. 105-106
53. EL, p. 366

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On the basis of these distinctions it is possible to understand von Hugel's conception of Eternal Life. In the fullest sense of the term this can only be predicated of God, for it excludes not only space, but Clock-Time and Duration. "But Eternal Life precludes space and clock-time because of the very intensity of its life. The Simultaneity is here the fullest expression of the Supreme Richness, the unspeakable Concreteness, the overwhelming Aliveness of God; and is at the opposite pole from all empty unity, all mere being -- any or all abstractions whatsoever."[54]

But in a secondary and derivative sense Eternal Life is operative in man's life and discovered for us there by Religion as "the effect, the action of a living Reality."[55] "This lesser eternal life appears to have its range between the pure Simultaneity of God, and mere Clock-Time, and to have its true form in Duration -- an ever more or less overlapping succession, capable of being concentrated into quasi-simultaneities. And this lesser eternal life, although unending, never boundless; nor does it (here below at least) ever become entirely actual."[56] Time, then, is the stage on which "our finite, durational spirit," is apprehended and apprehends "the infinite, eternal Spirit, God." "Time then, in the sense of duration (with the spiritual intercourse and the growth in spiritual character which we develope and consolidate in such time), is, for us men, not a barrier against Eternal Life, but the very stuff and means in and by which we vitally experience and apprehend that Life."[57]

54. Ibid, p. 383
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56. Ibid, pp. 383, 384
57. Ibid, pp. 386, 387

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Nor does Eternal Life demand an aloofmess from matter and the bodily senses, nor even a restriction of their use to means of spiritual self-expression. "It will include also a rich and wise contact with, and an awakening by means of, matter and things."[58]

Thus, the strivings, shrinkings, conflict, suffering and joys which constitute the chronology of earthly existence are also, and at the same time, related to God. Von Hugel uses the suggestive simile of the wheel to represent the "two lives" (von Ranke) which man experiences. "The successive acts practised as links in a chain are like the circumference of the wheel, where one point presses upon the earth immediately after the previous point, and where we have a movement of a perpetual chain with really no beginning and no end; and the action, not between the successive acts, but between the single action and God, is like to any one of the spokes of that wheel which move not one after another in an endless series, but each direct to its centre, its centre which in the Reality is God."[59]

The experience of Augustine and Monica at Ostia is a classic illustration of the interpenetration of temporal existence by Eternal Life.[60] Together as they "gasped with the mouth of the heart after those heavenly streams of the fountain of life" and contemplated the richness of the Divine Life they "touched by an impulse of all their heart" God Himself, the refreshing Contrast to the rushing, fretful world of nature. With no thought of the passing of time

58. Ibid, p. 389
59. RG, pp. 117, 118
60. CONFESSIONS, bk. IX, 23, 25

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they "touched on that Eternal Wisdom" and felt that could this but be continued they would know the meaning of eternal life and of the words, "enter thou into the joy of they Lord."[61]

Von Hugel, while holding to the Prevenience and Givenness of the Source of Eternal Life, firmly believed man could respond to or quench the in-working of the Divine Spirit. "And whereas the sense of Time, in the most fully eternalized of human spirits, would be so Durational as almost to lapse into simultaneity, the sense of Time with phenomenalized human souls would lose almost all Duration and be quite close to Clock-Time -- to the mechanical movement of soulless matter. This is certainly the case in this life; here we are merely assuming that what already is, as the deepest of our experiences, will continue to obtain as long as we last at all."[62] Eternal Life is thus qualitative, not quantitative, but its relationship to man's historical existence must be expressed dialectically. Thus, von Hugel concludes his ETERNAL LIFE with these words: "Neither an Eternal Life that is already fully achieved here below, nor an eternal life to be begun and known solely in the beyond satisfies these requirements. But only an Eternal Life already begun and truly known in part here, though fully to be achieved and completely to be understood hereafter, corresponds to the deepest longings of man's spirit as touched by the prevenient Spirit, God."[63]

The seriousness with which von Hugel took time and

61. EL, pp. 88-90; MER II, p. 248; E&A I, p. 86; E&A II, p. 141
62. EL, pp. 390,391; E&A I, pp. 215,216
63. EL, p. 396

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history was already evident in his early critical studies of the Gospels and Christology. His firm insistence on a nucleus of historical fact differentiated him from the growing group of Modernists who found the historical offensive and substituted the "timeless truths" as the cornerstone of their wholly immanent spiritual religion. In an important article translated by H. Bremond and entitled "Du Christ Eternel et de nos Christologies successives" von Hugel achieves "a mangificent defence of the quality and force of the Catholic and Christian act of faith even in terms of exaggeratedly critical views of the Gospel story and the historic Christ."[64] Since the English version has not survived and the subject is treated with more precision than later efforts the following translated quotation is especially valuable in reproducing von Hugel's thought on this important theme:

> Although the act of Christian faith necessarily goes beyond the historic facts -- the object, each one for itself, of historico-critical proof -- it nevertheless demands facts of that nature. It demands them because that is a condition of all human assent, since our souls are only awakened to the presence of spiritual realities when a contingent and historical stimulus from without excites them. It demands them because all complete and deep religion calls for a factor of this nature. The more complete and profound a religion is, the more it will present the paradox of the permanent seized through the transitory, the eternal manifested in time. This is so true that there would be no more Christianity, if the Christian faith did not rest on a basis of historic events, if criticism could not find, in traditions, in authentic documents, a solid kernal of words, actions, and definite manifestations -- a precise history of Our Lord . . . . The central affirmation to which we adhere is the Incarnation of God in man -- and this is in a unique

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> and definitely historical manner -- the Incarnation of God in a determinate soul and body, in Jesus of Nazareth. (Yet it is not the events, the facts, the miracles, the prophecies which create the faith.) If souls have been drawn to believe in Him, to recognize and accept what Christ demanded of them, it is above all because Christ satisfied the deep aspirations which He had deposited in them, and He was Himself the answer for which their spiritual life waited and called.[65]

Even as the rejection of the Natural and the attempted exclusive occupation with the Supernatural was seen to be a distinguishing feature of false mysticism, so also is the flight from the vissicitudes of time and history to the consolations of eternity. "For false Mysticism has not been satisfied with denying mere Clock-time and proclaiming Simultaneity and Action as what ultimate Reality already fully is, and as what we ourselves may hope, in a future form of existence, to possess, according to our creaturely degree, in predominance and with clearness. But it has generally ignored or denied the profoundly important element of Duration; and, still worse, has attempted to reduce the Simultaneity to a mere empty point of a blank Unity."[66] Von Hugel believed that only an acceptance of History as necessary to Religion could effectually suppress these interrelated errors.

III. "God Alone Is Fully Free."

Throughout his writings von Hugel vigorously attempts to resuscitate the doctrine of God's freedom as found in Augustine and Thomas Aquinas. It was Augustine who said, "posse non peccare, magna est libertas; non posse peccare,

65. Quoted in Bedoyere, op. cit., pp. 165, 166
66. E&A II, pp. 53, 54

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maxima est." (It is already a great liberty to be able to avoid sin; but the greatest liberty is to be unable to sin at all.)[67] In his SUMMA Aquinas elaborates how perfect freedom consists in the spontaneous and joyous self-expression of a perfect nature. "This doctrine cannot but be true, unless God, Who cannot sin, is thereby a slave; and unless human souls which, in proportion to the length and depth of their devotedness, very certainly grow less liable to grave sin, thereby become less free. Thus the Liberty of Choice is an imperfect kind of liberty, and Perfect Liberty consists in willing fully and spontaneously the behests of a perfect nature, and in the incapacity to will otherwise. Hence the more arbitrary an act, the less really free it is."[68]

This perfect freedom of God can only be appreciated when placed in contrast to the different kind of freedom which man experiences. For man is "by his Nature constituted in Imperfect liberty, but the same man is called by Grace to the love of, and the indefinite approximation to, the Perfect Liberty of God."[69] He is thus opposed to what he considers to be a well-intentioned and understandable popularization of the problem of evil as seen in such current Anglican essays as were included in FOUNDATIONS and in Professor Sorley's MORAL VALUES AND THE IDEA OF GOD.[70] He saw the logical conclusion of this argument to be that the goodness of God was in proportion to the amount of evil which was potentially in his nature. For von Hugel this

67. See DE CIVITATE DEI, xxii, 30
68. E&A I, p. 17; see also E&A II, p. 203, RG, pp. 119 f
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An autobiographical word will illumine the course of his thought on this point. Writing to a girl on the eve of her Anglican confirmation, the Baron said:

> You see, when I began to try to be good -- to serve God -- I already, alas, found myself involved in gravely bad habits and inclinations. But this, once I was, by God's grace, awakened to long to be straight and true -- to go direct to God and Christ -- had one great advantage. I saw young fellows all around me fretting to be free, to be their own sole, full masters. They fretted against this and that thing; against this and that person. They thought if only they could get away from these, they would indeed be free. But I myself could not feel that to be nearly enough; I was too little happy in myself to fiddle-faddle at such little things! I wanted, I had to, get rid of -- not those outside conditions, not those other people and their orders, etc: but I had, somehow, to become free from self, from my poor, shabby, bad, all-spoiling self![71]

Sin then, of which man was capable but not God, was "the self-adoration, the solipsism of the spirit."[72] Von Hugel was careful to distinguish this corruption of man's freedom from all finiteness and atavism. "As to the Christian outlook, its genius is sensitively keen and final concerning which is the central, the most heinous sin. The central sin, for the Christian, is Pride and Self-sufficiency, distinctly more so than Impurity and Sloth,"[73]

For one who was so sensitive to the values of the mystic tradition and who had no compunctions against the presence of Greek concepts in Christian Theology von Hugel's antipathy toward the doctrine of evil as "negative, " a privation of the good, is most striking. While never

71. SL, p. 352
72. MER II, p. 301
73. E&A II, pp. 235-237

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71. BL, p. 352
72. MHR II, p. 301
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Nowhere does von Hugel appear to be more the "practical" and less the "speculative" mystic than when he confronts the age-old question Πόθεν τὸ Κακόν. His various treatments of the theme always reveal two attitudes: his desire to face the phenomenon in all its stark reality, and his reverent agnosticism with regard to any adequate theoretical

74. RG, p. 12
75. EL, pp. 144-46; see also MER II, pp. 292-297
76. EL, p. 146

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74. EG, p. 12
75. EL, pp. 144-45; see also MEH II, pp. 292-297
76. EL, p. 146

formulation. In speaking to his niece about his forthcoming book, THE REALITY OF GOD, he said:

> I want to write so plainly and fully in my book about the problem of evil, the power of evil in a world ruled by an omnipotent God, the source of all good; we never get rid of this problem. We can only minimise it. There are people who pretend that the earthquake of Tokio was a good thing -- to have cancer in the face is somehow splendid, and shows the goodness of God! I hate all that talk. Evil is a mystery, and you don't do away with it by calling it good. People often find strange reasons for disbelieving in God. They say so many things, ask so many questions -- about the Inquisition, about Galileo -- but they leave out this -- the great question -- the problem of evil. They strain at a gnat and swallow a camel.[77]

But when he went to "write plainly" in the book he stated in the Introduction: "Why should we undertake to explain evil? Is this not very fussy and officious? It is quite possible to go on believing something we are quite aware we only partially understand and can only partially check. If this were not so, a man could certainly not believe in his own wife's virtue."[78] After treating the theme he warns that "the reader had better stop asking questions, and instead spend his time in understanding more and more the great lights which he now possesses."[79] Once he makes a gesture at going beyond this. He timidly suggests value in the conception of Aquinas that God's ominpotence does not mean that he can do all things, because he cannot violate his nature, nor any of those conditions of being which are but the reflection of his unalterable nature. Thus, even as God could not make two and two into five and what has happened not to have happened, so it is not unreasonable to

77. LN, p. xxvi
78. RG, p. 16
79. Ibid, p. 124

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77. IM, p. xxvi
78. MO, p. 16
79. Ibid, p. 124

hold that even God could not create a finite infinite, a limited God. "Thus God would indeed be able not to create at all, and able to create beings more perfect and stronger than we are, but in no case would He be able to create a being of itself incapable of not falling away."[80] Then he dismisses the subject by saying, "Let the man who sees further kindly give us a big conclusive book about it." Christianity no more than any other outlook adequately explains evil. But von Hugel insists that it has done two important things. "It has indeed greatly intensified the problem by its noble insistence upon the reality and heinousness of Sin; and it has then overcome all this Evil, not indeed in theory, but in practice, by actually producing, in the midst of deep suffering and through a still deeper faith and love, souls which are the living expression of the deepest beatitude and peace."[81]

But von Hugel seeks to press God's freedom even further. Not only is God free from sin, he is free from suffering.[82] In accordance with his emphasis on the Transcendence and Otherness of God von Hugel stresses God as Perfect Love, the Ocean of Joy, Unmixed Joy and Entire Delectation. Probably nowhere in modern theology can there be found more insistence on God as "Sheer Joy." Harnack is taken to task for his superficiality in crediting the whole of the <u>religious</u> worth to be on the side of the "Patripassians" and seeing only philosophical and other, not directly religious, reasons at work in its defeat. "I am convinced, on the contrary,

80. Ibid, p. 125
81. E&A I, p. 94
82. See important lecture "Suffering and God," E&A II, pp. 167 f.

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80. Ibid, p. 129
81. MEA I, p. 94
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that only a non-"Patripassian" view could defend and transmit the very deepest note of the religious consciousness."[83]

But this non-suffering God was not synonomous with the cold and barren God of Deism. Equally as strong as his insistence on the fact that God does not suffer was his affirmation that God does sympathize. God may be without passio but there is compassio. Man's basic need is for the "Otherness" of God; but he also needs, though von Hugel believed "less strongly," the "likeness" of God the burden-bearer. At this point the Incarnation is introduced to show that "such fellow-suffering (deeper than ever we ourselves could suffer, and in One Who shares with us the evil of suffering, but without any admixture of the far greater evil of sin) is supplied by the Humanity of Our Lord . . . . this humanity of Jesus brings suffering as near to God as is compatible with Godhead." The definition of the Council of Chalcedon is invoked to stress how Jesus could suffer but God could only sympathize.[84] "Sympathy, yes, indeed, overflowing Sympathy -- a Sympathy which we cannot succeed in picturing vividly without drawing upon our own experiences of ourselves, where sympathy and suffering are so closely intertwined; but no Suffering in God; and Suffering indeed overflowing suffering in Christ, but as Man, not as God."[85] In a schematization, more neat than convincing, von Hugel would affirm the contrast between man, the tempted, suffering and sinning; and Jesus,

83. E&A II, p. 188
84. E&A II, p. 223
85. Ibid, p. 205

83. ZKA II, p. 188
84. ZKA II, p. 223
85. Ibid., p. 205

the tempted, suffering and sinless; and God the living Reality beyond all temptation, suffering and sin.[86]

While one may find this formulation of the distinction between the passive Deity and the suffering Incarnate Son inadequate, there is no disguising the momentous issues with which it is concerned. Von Hugel's efforts to relate sympathy and impassibility in God reflect what Paul Tillich has described as the polar elements of individualization and participation in the creative ground of the divine life.[87] Concerning this Tillich writes: "God himself is said to participate in the negativities of creaturely existence. This idea is supported by mystical as well as christological thought. Nevertheless, the idea must be stated with reservations. Genuine patripassianism (the doctrine that God the Father has suffered in Christ) rightly was rejected by the early church. God as being-itself transcends non-being absolutely. On the other hand, God as creative life includes the finite and, with it, non-being, although non-being is eternally conquered and the finite is eternally reunited within the infinity of the divine life. Therefore, it is meaningful to speak of a participation of the divine life in the negativities of creaturely life."[88] Bertrand Brasnett has subjected von Hugel's view to stringent criticism in his THE SUFFERING OF THE IMPASSIBLE GOD. "So erudite a philosopher and theologian as von Hugel was perfectly aware that human experience is not adequate to embrace the whole of Deity;

86. Ibid, p. 239
87. SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY, Vol. I, pp. 174-178, 244-245, 269-270
88. Ibid, p. 270

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86. Ibid, p. 279
87. SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY, Vol. I, pp. 174-178, 244-245, 269-270
88. Ibid, p. 270

but we venture to suggest that in his efforts to place some regions of the divine being outside man's reach he is in danger of putting the real God beyond the reach of man; a result he himself would be the first to deplore."[89] Brasnett seeks to preserve the justified emphasis on impassibility with a more sensitive concern for the element of participation.

> No one wishes to maintain that the pain of the divine sympathy should be such as to leave the Deity agitated and distracted, powerless to succour or aid; but would a being, upon whom pain had this effect be in any real sense God at all? Certainly in our own exposition of the pain in the heart of God we have had no wish to suggest that this pain in any way flurries or distracts God, or disturbs his cool, calm rationality; the being we worship we count God partly because he is so strong to bear pain; because, though he endures an agony not only of sympathy with men but also of sorrow over the strength of evil, yet this agony can never make his judgement err nor cause him to swerve one hair's-breadth from his purpose. The values, religious and other, that von Hugel would secure by shutting out pain from the life of God, we believe to be better secured by making God strong to the uttermost in the bearing of pain. He is a God not unconscious of the sting and throb of pain, but he endures pain as a thing indifferent, because it is not fitting that any pain or sorrow should turn him from his age-long purpose.[90]

It is evident that in von Hugel's witness to God as alone fully free he is not attempting to baptize Aristotle's Unmoved Mover. Nevertheless he makes frequent explicit efforts to utilize the Stagirite's conception of "Energeia" for his own interpretation of the divine life.[91] He believed that to this very time Aristotle had produced the most satisfactory and scientific description and explanation of that great stream of experience and conception

89. Brasnett, B. R., THE SUFFERING OF THE IMPASSIBLE GOD, p. 138
90. Ibid, p. 119
91. E&A I, p. 131; E&A II, pp. 50, 51; 179; MER II, pp 250, 251

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89. Brameld, B. H., THE SUFFERING OF THE IMPASSIBLE GOD, p. 138

90. Ibid, p. 119

91. EEA I, p. 131; EEA II, pp. 30, 31; 179; MHR II, pp. 250, 251

which runs throughout all full and sane Christian Mysticism -- "the full Functioning of the Spirit and Personality, in which all its Potentiality is actualized, and where the very fullness, richness and harmony of the Action produces an overflowing joy and peace, an equilibrium of the profoundest, purest Energising."[92] In his ETHICS he inverts the ordinary view that a "function" (ἐνέργεια) is a sort of "process" (γένεσις), or even a sort of "motion" (κίνησις); and he makes Function (ἐνέργεια) the more inclusive notion, while subsuming Motion (κίνησις) under Function as a peculiar species -- an imperfect kind of Function (ἐνέργεια). Man cannot be continuously active. But God is not subject to such limitations because of his pure and perfect nature. Therefore the divine "Energeia" is kept up inexhaustibly and ever generates supreme pleasure. In one of Aristotle's choice passages he asserts that "if the nature of anything were simple, the same action would ever be sweetest to it. And this is the reason why God always enjoys a single and simple pleasure; for there is not only an activity of motion, but also one void of motion, and pleasure is rather in constancy than in motion."[93] It follows that the perfect or divine life is one of unceasing and unchanging activity, which is also an eternal consciousness of supreme happiness.[94] This would, indeed, be a narrow conception of the divine life if restricted, as Aristotle's

92. E&A II, p. 51
93. ETH. NICH. VII, 14, 8
94. See an excellent essay by F. C. S. Schiller in HUMANISM, entitled "Activity and Substance," pp. 204-227

words might seem to imply, to a purely intellectual self-contemplation. "Yet, here as in Plato, the man Aristotle apprehends and thrills to far more than the philosopher Aristotle succeeds in analysing and systematising; and the witness to God, here again, as Pure Joy, remains sure and striking."[95]

Dakin has illustrated this by the homely contrast between the characters of the "flutterbudget" and the "strong, silent man."[96] The former is rushed and swamped in a restless, self-occupied, feverish moving to and fro in the midst of numerous unactualized capabilities. But the "strong, silent man" accomplishes ten times as much with one-tenth of the "flutterbudget's" ineffective activity. This is because his being is far greater than his activity, of which it is the source. This is God, as "Actus Purus." But von Hugel has affirmed that man "is called by Grace to the love of, and the indefinite approximation to, the Perfect Liberty of God." Therefore, "the human being in becoming more and more Spirit and Personality--more and more Function and Action, and less and less mere Process and Activity -- becomes more and more like to God, the ceaseless, utter realization of all His nature's possibilities."[97]

IV. "God Is The Supreme Good."

Von Hugel is fond of referring to the ontological character of religion by describing God as "man's True

95. E&A II, p. 179
96. Dakin, op. cit., p. 191
97. E&A II, p. 51

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Home." No amount of the "Oughtness" of ethics can be made to take the place of this "Isness." "In proportion to the depth and the breadth of any and every creature's nature, the creature possesses, or can attain to, the consciousness that God is its sole ultimate rest, sole pure delight. Religion, as distinct from ethics, flies straight at once to this great ultimate fact, to this unique personalist reality, to God as Beatitude and Beatifier. Thus the religious soul, in proportion to the strength of its religion, always reaches beyond all abstract law, all mere sense of duty and of obligation."[98]

St. Augustine, who knew so well the restlessness of the soul until it reposes in God, is recommended as the great doctor of this divine rest and divine delight. From him von Hugel found confirmation for his contention that "religion is essentially Social <u>vertically</u> -- indeed here is its deepest root."[99] Von Hugel's caution in avoiding the popular conception of God as the "First of creatures" competing for man's affection and his desire to see God placed "not alongside of creatures but behind them," whereby he is loved through them and in them, not apart from them, has already been observed.[100] The love of neighbor is not pitted against love of God, but it is made derivative in von Hugel's thought. "For thus the rivalry between God and creatures for the possession of our hearts will become less and less a struggle between a mysterious obligation and a clear fascination, and more and

98. E&A II, p 221
99. EL, p. 395
100. MER II, pp. 353-355

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99. EL, p. 395
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more a competition between an ocean-wide, all-penetrating joy, when our souls come to their true, deep selves, and pleasures feverish, fleeting and shallow, when we allow ourselves heedlessly to be carried along by our superficial selves."[101]

Although no soul can abstract itself from its fellows, von Hugel did recommend, similarly to Hocking's "Principle of Alternation," that one ought frequently to recollect oneself in a simple sense of God's presence. "Such moments of direct preoccupation with God alone bring a deep refreshment and simplification to the soul."[102] While not to be sought directly, as a by-product of this recollection and alignment the soul would experience a "wholesome, strengthening zest" in contradistinction to "an unhealthy, weakening excitement." "Hence one great end, and one sure test of right living and dispositions, is the degree to which such living and dispositions make zest to prevail in our lives and make excitement to disappear from them. Now there is no zest comparable to the zest, the expansion, the joy brought to the soul by God and the soul's close union with Him."[103]

But in emphasizing God as the True Home of souls, von Hugel is wary of the mystic's grave temptation to lapse into a monistic universalism. He exhibits an unusually clear grasp of what Emil Brunner calls "the fundamental category of the Bible -- personal corres-

101. E&A II, pp. 221, 222
102. EL, p. 396
103. E&A II, p. 239

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101. MEA II, pp. 221, 222
102. EL, p. 395
103. MEA II, p. 239

pondence."[104] He never loses sight of this two-sided but unambiguous relation; the state of the dependent-independent creature who is "face to face" with God according to His will. In his important address, "What Do We Mean By Heaven? And What Do We Mean By Hell?" he examines the Scriptural materials in the light of what he calls the demands of the religious consciousness. He is convinced that "we confront the impressive fact that throughout the New Testament there is nowhere a denial or ignoring, but there is everywhere an affirmation or implication, of man's life here below as a choice between immense alternatives furnished with corresponding abiding consequences."[105] This element of real decision provides the possibility of increasingly becoming eternalized or phenomenalized human souls.[106] At the same time he is equally explicit in his denial of all Manichaeism, whereby evil would fully balance Good. Even hell itself is only hell because it is hell in relation to God. "We shall thus indeed admit an Evil and a Suffering in the Lost, in correspondence to the respective Good and Happiness of the Saved; but we shall carefully guard against finding that Evil and Suffering to be as full and as concentrated as is this Good and Happiness."[107]

V. "God Is Other Than Man."

Von Hugel is deeply convinced "that the truth, and hence the fascination of Religion, as really requires some such emphasis on the unlikeness of God as it requires em-

104. THE DIVINE-HUMAN ENCOUNTER, p. 66
105. E&A I, p. 212
106. EL, p. 391
107. E&A I, p. 215

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105. ERA I, p. 212
106. EL, p. 391
107. ERA I, p. 215

phasis on the likeness."[108] It was this relationship of likeness in unlikeness and unlikeness in likeness between God and man which Medieval and Renaissance mystics represented by the analogy of a faithful dog in his prompt affection, perception and attendance upon his master.[109] "The religious consciousness is always of Something other than itself; and, in proportion to the spirituality, i. e., to the specific religiousness, of this consciousness, does an Infinite not the soul's own appear present and operative here and now in the world and in the soul -- an Infinite different in kind from any simply human prolongation or ideal, since the soul rests upon It, and finds its support in the actual presence and operation of this Infinite, this Perfectness."[110] The major emphasis is, thus, placed upon unlikeness and difference in God; but never to the exclusion of likeness and similarities. For these "differences do not stand to each other as simply contradictions and exclusions, but as two conditions of which the lesser requires the larger, and finds in this larger its enveloping harbour, help and peace."[111]

Therefore, while von Hugel is found in the front rank of those theologians who have helped this generation to recover a valid sense of the transcendence of God, his "Otherness" must be distinguished from both the "ganz andere" of Rudolf Otto and the extravagances of Karl Barth. Von Hugel is not a "Roman Catholic Barth." He is

108. E&A II, p. 222; also p. 204
109. RG, p. 117
110. E&A I, p. 34
111. RG, p. 114

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108. EEA II, p. 222; also p. 204.
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112. EL, pp. 366, 367
113. SUMMA THEOLOGIAE, I, Qu. 75, art. 5 c
114. E&A II, p. 181

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112. Id., pp. 366, 367
113. SUMMA THEOLOGIAE, I, Qu. 75, art. 5 c
114. MEA VI, p. 181

What, then, is the least inadequate analogy for depicting the nature of God and the relationship he sustains to man? If Rudolf Otto is correct in his assertion that "it is an indication of its superiority that in the Biblical conception of God the pole of the personal rather than of the impersonal is altogether preponderant,"[115] then von Hugel has strongly emphasized the basic element in Biblical thought. For this Other is always a "personalist Other." The analogy of personal encounter is used, if not exclusively, then preponderantly. In justifying the mystic's use of the marital analogy von Hugel states that "Christianity remains unchangeably a relation between person and person, between the single human soul and Christ, and that it is difficult indeed to secure a sufficiently touching and tender symbol and imagery for this relation, if all suggestions derived from the married state are to be excluded."[116]

On this point, von Hugel felt himself especially indebted to Andrew Seth Pringle-Pattison who had worked out more fully the implications of the analogy of personality as applied to God, but in ways which von Hugel believed to be consonant with his own thought. In his important HEGELIANISM AND PERSONALITY Pringle-Pattison states: "We have learned -- and this is well -- to be chary of attributing to the Divine Spirit a subjectivity like our own. But it must not be forgotten that if we are to keep the name of God at all, or any equivalent term, subjectivity -- an existence of God for Himself, analogous to our own

115. Otto, R., THE IDEA OF THE HOLY, p. 206, footnote 2
116. RG, p. 129

personal existence, though doubtless transcending it infinitely in innumerable ways -- is an essential element in the conception."[117] This admission of a real self-consciousness in God is based on the epistemological principle of "interpretation by means of the highest category within our reach." It then follows that "the self-conscious life is that highest, and we should be false to ourselves, if we denied in God what we recognise as the source of dignity and worth in ourselves . . . . Just as we do not read our full selves into life of lower forms, so -- or rather much more so -- must we avoid transferring to God all the features of our own self-consciousness. God may, nay must, be infinitely more -- we are at least certain that He cannot be less -- than we know ourselves to be."[118]

Such phrases as "infinitely more" and "transcending it in innumerable ways" suggest the caution of Pringle-Pattison, which von Hugel shared, in attributing the nineteenth-century conception of "personality" to God. It was Clement Webb, whose thought was greatly influenced by von Hugel, who has so instructively treated this question.[119] On the one hand, he speaks of "personality <u>in</u> God" rather than the personality <u>of</u> God. By so doing he suggests that God can never be less than what we call "personal" but He may also be other than personal. While von Hugel was forever seeking to track down the last vestiges of Pantheism in the thought of these two friends, this formu-

117. HEGELIANISM AND PERSONALITY, pp. 233, 234
118. Ibid, p. 235
119. See his GOD AND PERSONALITY and PROBLEMS IN THE RELATIONS OF GOD AND MAN.

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117. RECONCILIATION AND PERSONALITY, pp. 233, 234.
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lation would coincide with his own emphasis on the inexhaustible plenitude of the divine Being. On the other hand, Webb also spoke of personality finding its perfection only in God, not man. "Personality is not merely something which we observe in men; rather it is something which, though suggested to us by what we find in men, we perceive to be only imperfectly realized in them; and this can only be because we are somehow aware of a perfection or ideal with which we contrast what we find in men as falling short of it."[120] This conception occurs frequently in von Hugel's writings and is often accompanied by the famous quotation of Lotze that "Perfect Personality is compatible only with the conception of an Infinite Being; finite beings can only achieve an approximation to it."[121]

Such an emphasis on the nature of God as Perfect Personality and the God-Man relationship depicted under the analogy of a "Love-Encounter" could only mean a radical recasting of the concept of "mystical union." While von Hugel sought to retain the historic conception in his writings, it is largely reinterpreted in the I-Thou framework. "For though God was and could ever be without us, God is no more God for us, if we cease to be relatively distinct from Him. Let the drop be put in the ocean, and for the drop there is no more either ocean or drop. And pray note, that the difference is not by any means simply one of size, of quantity or relative degree of worth; it is essentially

120. GOD AND PERSONALITY, p. 21
121. GRUNDZUGE DER RELIGIONSPHILOSOPHIE (ed, 1884), pp. 45, 46. See his use in E&A I, pp. 49, 50 and his article "Prof. Eucken on the Struggle for Spiritual Life," The Spectator, Nov. 14, 1896, p. 681.

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quite as much one of quality, of the nature altogether. The similarity can not only never become identity, but it can never just simply and entirely correspond or supplement."[122] In his article "Experience and Transcendence," von Hugel seeks to correlate what is valid in the testimony of mystic union with the legitimate witness of transcendence. Certainly that experience testifies to "union with something larger than ourselves" and to be able "in that union to find our greatest peace." But, on the other hand, "in proportion as the experience grows in depth, vividness and articulation, the soul itself becomes strongly conscious in the midst of all this closeness of penetration of an immense difference between God and the creature, immense in kind, not only in degree."[123] Thus, union becomes communion; selfhood is not trespassed. This persistence of the self even in the most harmonious union of man and God is described by Pringle-Pattison in accordance with the whole tenor of this strain of von Hugel's interpretation:

> I have a centre of my own -- a will of my own -- which no one shares with me or can share -- a centre which I maintain even in my dealings with God himself. For it is eminently false to say that I put off, or can put off, my personality here. The religious consciousness lends no countenance whatever to the representation of the human soul as a mere mode or efflux of the divine. On the contrary, only in a person, in a relatively independent or self-centered being is religious approach to God possible. Religion is self-surrender of the human will to the divine. 'Our wills are ours to make them Thine.' But this is self-surrender, a surrender which only self, only will, can make.[124]

122. SL, p. 93
123. "Experience and Transcendence," op, cit., p. 13
124. Pringle-Pattison, A. S., op. cit., pp. 228,229

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This strong personalist strain is dominant for von Hugel and can be seen throughout his entire writings. But, in the midst of some of his strongest I-Thou passages, there can also be observed an undercurrent which intimates that the analogy of personal intercourse is inadequate to the Reality to be described. This has already been observed in his caution lest "personality" be applied to God in the same sense as in man. He warns against the dangers of depicting God as either object alongside of other objects or "even simply oneSubject amongst other subjects."[125] The figure of personal encounter cannot do justice to the interpenetration of God's Spirit and man's, as when he writes: "Our spirit clothes and expresses His; His Spirit first creates and then sustains and stimulates our own. The two, as regards the inner life of the human soul, rise and sink together."[126] He gives a splendid justification for the open-eyed use of anthropomorphisms[127] but insists that it must always be a "critical anthropomorphism."[128] These modifications reveal von Hugel's awareness that any predicate or analogy, when applied to God, is nearly as false as it is true. A predicate must be balanced by one of opposite or contrasting name. Thus, he is saying, in his seemingly inconsistent and unsystematic fashion, that God is personal and other-than-personal. This is the point of Hocking's assertion that "God is person and no-person; loving and non-loving; fighter and no fighter; just and yet alike to all; merciful and unbending. The positive and tenable value of any predicate, subject to such

125. E&A I, p. 50
126. MER I, p. 370
127. E&A I, pp. 39f, 49f
128. EL, pp. 205 f

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125. MMA I, p. 50
126. MMH I, p. 370
127. MMA I, pp. 397, 497
128. EL, pp. 205 f

subtractions is problematic. God appears as a being in whom opposite traits are strangely united: but the nature of the center in which such oppositions agree, or are neutralized, is not picturable -- is known, if at all, only to immediate experience. As an object in the world of objects, God is next to nothing; so the mystics have always truly said."[129]

This oscillation between God as personal and supra-personal (with the accompanying temptation for the supra-personal to degenerate into the impersonal) is a striking phenomenon running through the whole course of the history of religions. Rudolf Otto has traced this tension between the personal and the supra-personal in the numen of primitive religious feeling.[130] But it is also to recur in the maturer stages of the developing experience of God. In Greek thought δαίμων is indisputably a single, concrete, personal Being, while the richer term δαιμόνιον could hardly be called a being or individual entity. In Indian terminology this tension can be seen to turn on the transposition of an accent. Rakṣás is the concrete, personal and masculine; Ráksas, a word more charged with awe and terror, represents the supra-personal and neuter. At the highest stage of Indian thought brahmán is the everlasting Lord and God, the personal Brahmá; while bráhman is the divine Absolute, the supra-personal Bráhma, an "It" rather than a "He." Even in the markedly personalistic Hebrew thought Yahweh reveals

129. Hocking, W. E., THE MEANING OF GOD IN HUMAN EXPERIENCE, pp. 322, 323.

130. Otto, R., op. cit., pp. 202 f. See especially his analysis of the Old Testament story of Jacob at Bethel, pp. 202-203.

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The fact that the Medieval mystics held firmly to both the Way of Analogy and the Negative Theology indicates their effort to maintain in indissoluble union the personal and the more-than-personal character of God. Apart from the use of analogy nothing could be said about God. Therefore, the analogia entis is not a method of discovering truth about God but a form in which knowledge of revelation must be expressed. The Negative Theology witnesses to the inadequacy and need of purification for every analogy used and seeks to point beyond the earthen vessel to the abiding treasure. While von Hugel nowhere sought to systematically relate these two strains, the presence of both in his writings and his appreciation of both phases of Medieval thought indicate the direction in which his analysis and interpretation would run.

While a strong emphasis on the supra-personal nature of God sometimes accompanies an unethical and irreligious attitude, and at times betokens a desperate attempt to equate

other-than-personal features. Even as today we use the abstract noun, "deity" or the adjectival neuter expression, "the divine" when we seek to escape from the too narrow confines of the notion of unitary personality applied to God, so the Hebrews had recourse to the adoption of a plural substantive form which was made to govern a singular verb. Thus, Elohim is "gods" and represents the polar opposite of the personalist Yahweh. In Medieval thought the same tension can be seen at work in Meister Eckhart's distinction between Gott and Gottheit.

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faith in God with naturalism,[131] this is not always true and never is it true in this minor note of von Hugel's thought which parallels the major personalist strain. Rather, the supra-personal represents the dim background against which the personal alone can be appreciated. "But this Personal character is that side of His nature which is turned manward -- it is the 'Cape of Good Hope' jutting out from a mountain range which, as it recedes, is lost to view in the 'tenebrae aeternae' -- only to be expressed by the suspension of speech and the inspiration of sacred song."[132] Then, too, the supra-personal represents a desire to safeguard wide tracts of the divine Being from the intrusion even of the religious consciousness of humanity.

Von Hugel's limited use of the supra-personal can be seen chiefly at two points. On the one hand, he has a partially developed doctrine of the Absolute. ". . . . the religious sense, at its deepest and in the long run, will not, must not, be restricted to the Self-limited Creative God, or (worse still) to the persuasion that the whole of the Absolute -- that God in and for Himself -- has been absorbed in God as Creator. The religious sense, on the contrary, must be allowed to press on to, to be moved and fully satisfied only by the Ultimate, the Absolute."[133] On the other hand, there is an even more restricted designation of God as "Pure Being." This conception is never minimized as the last residue of a process of abstraction. Rather, it is implicit in his thought that the boundless content of

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> "Lord" and "Father" are the central symbols for the ego-thou relationship to God. But the ego-thou relation, although it is the central and most dynamic relation, is not the only one, for God is being-itself. In appelations like "Almighty God" the irresistible power of God's creativity is felt; in "Eternal God" the unchangeable ground of all life is indicated. In addition to such appellative symbols, there a re symbols used in meditation in which the ego-thou relation is less explicit, although it always is implicit. Contemplating the mystery of the divine ground, considering the infinity of the divine life, intuiting the marvel of the divine creativity, adoring the inexhaustible meaning of the divine self-manifestation -- all these experiences are related to God without involving an explicit ego-thou relation. Often a prayer which addressing itself to God as Lord or Father moves over into a contemplation of the divine ground. Conversely, a meditation about the divine mystery may end in a prayer to God as Lord or Father.[135]

134. Tillich, P., SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY, Vol. I, pp. 223, f; 244-245.
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VI. "We Men Need God Much More than, And Very Differently From, The Way And Degree In Which God Needs Us Men."

All that has been said before leads up to this declaration of the self-completeness, the independence, and the awe-inspiring pre-eminence of God. Von Hugel describes this profound non-equality, this non-interchangeable relation between God and man, by saying: "God is the Absolute Cause, the Ultimate Reason, the Sole True End and Determiner of our existence, of our persistence, of our nature, of our essential calls and requirements. God is all these things for man. Man is not one of these things for God."[136] This is in essential agreement with Emil Brunner's conclusion that "the relation between God and man is thus always reciprocal, yet never interchangeable like the relation between left and right. God is always and inconvertibly the first, man always and inconvertibly the second in this relation."[137]

This witness to the aseity of God, whereby His creation is neither a necessary nor a contingent act, is most clearly expressed in von Hugel's comparisons of the Christian doctrine of creation and various Idealistic theories of emanation. At this point his appreciation and criticism of his close friend, Andrew Seth Pringle-Pattison is revealing.[138] For more than thirty years he had been indebted to this formidable critic of Hegelianism for the most substantial help in the question of the immanence and transcendence of God. It was this Scottish philosopher who had discerningly opposed the modern "desire and determination to have a voice

136. E&A II, p. 224; see also LN, pp. xvii, xviii.
137. Brunner, E., THE DIVINE-HUMAN ENCOUNTER, p. 49
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and a vote in the cosmic councils." He had laid bare the fallacy of "The Democratic Conception of God" whereby "society, democratic from end to end, can brook no such class distinctions as the effete European contrast between God and man."[139] In describing the self-hood involved in the God-Man relation he had underscored the fact that "the most perfect alter ego must remain an alter if the experience is to exist, if the joy of an intensified life is to be tasted at all."[140] For "it takes two not only to make a bargain; it takes two to love and to be loved, two to worship and to be worshipped. . . . . the most self-effacing love but ministers to the intensity of a double fruition."[141] He even dared the assertion, so unpopular in modern thought, that "however impious and intolerable one may feel the image of the potter and the clay, however certain one may be that the integrity of the self-conscious being is involved in the very perfection of the divine nature, still the relation between the finite spirit and its inspiring source must be, in the end, incapable of statement in terms of the relation of one finite individual to another. To treat God as no more than primus inter pares is to lose touch both with speculation and religion."[142]

Nevertheless, in the same Gifford Lectures from which these quotations have been taken, von Hugel detected a minor and inconsistent strain of uneradicated Hegelianism which "would be most natural to a mind steeped for a lifetime in Hegelian thinking, even though it has finally overcome, in

139. IDEA OF GOD, p. 238
140. Ibid, p. 289
141. Ibid.
142. Ibid, pp. 320,321

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class distinctions as the effete European contrast between
God and man."[139] In describing the self-mood involved in
the God-Man relation he had understood the fact that "the
most perfect alter ego must remain an alter if the experience
is to exist, if the joy of an intensified life is to be
tasted at all."[140] For "it takes two not only to make a
bargain; it takes two to love and to be loved, two to wor-
ship and to be worshipped. . . . . the most self-effacing
love but minister to the intensity of a double fruition."[141]
He even dared the assertion, so unpopular in modern thought,
that "however impious and intolerable one may feel the image
of the potter and the clay, however certain one may be that
the integrity of the self-conscious being is involved in the
very perfection of the divine nature, still the relation
between the finite spirit and its inspiring source must be,
in the end, traceable or statement in terms of the relation
of one finite individual to another. To treat God as no
more than primus inter pares is to lose touch both with
speculation and religion."[142]

Nevertheless, in the same Gifford Lectures from which
these quotations have been taken, von Hugel detected a minor
and inconsistent strain of unregenerated Hegelianism which
"would be most natural to a mind steeped for a lifetime in
Hegelian thinking, even though it has finally overcome, in

139. IDEA OF GOD, p. 238
140. Ibid., p. 289
141. Ibid.
142. Ibid., pp. 320,321

other points, the weaknesses special to this school."[143] In spite of his demonstration of the essentially circular character of Berkeley's argument concerning the non-existence of unthinking things and his clear understanding that being known makes no difference to the existence of anything real he tends to imply that the cognitive situation of man is of itself decisive as to the possibility or actuality of God's existence outside of this situation. "A condition of man's knowledge (man can only know God in relationship to Him) becomes unperceivedly a condition of God's existence."[144] In spite of his frequent attacks on the "finite god" he comes perilously close to Hegel's contention that God is not more necessary to the world than the world to God. God is depicted as only attaining consciousness of himself and taking on the lineaments of God in and through finite spirits.[145] Finally, in spite of his professed belief in the non-equality of the God-Man relationship, von Hugel believes him to misapprehend one element of a paradox even richer in range and depth than the "die to live" paradox. For, not only does God love and reveal himself to man and beg, "My son, give Me thy heart;" it is also true that "there is no parity of nature or of need, no absolute correlation, between God and whatever is not God; because God has not a sheer necessity to create, or a sheer need of creatures, even once they are created. God does not require finite beings nor the universe to attain to self-consciousness or self-articulation; whereas all finite beings and the universe strictly require

143. E&A II, pp. 149, 150
144. Ibid, p. 149
145. IDEA OF GOD, pp. 277, 295

God for their various degrees of reality and consciousness."[146]

Von Hugel believed that the lack of sensitivity on this point in the writings of the Scottish Pringle-Pattison and Bernard Bosanquet, of French descent, could only partially be explained by a positive fascination for Hegelian pantheism. It was "almost as largely from an excessive reaction against Scotch and French Calvinism."[147]

For all of its clumsiness, von Hugel believed that the indissoluble two-sided, yet never interchangeable, relation of God and man was given vigorous testimony in the scholastic distinction between God's essential and His accidental glory. God's essential glory is already attained by His unspeakably rich inner life; His accidental glory is attained in and through finite spirits and their happiness as found by them in Him.[148]

VII. "The Prevenience Of God Appears As The Root-Fact And Root-Truth Of All Previous Positions."

Von Hugel would surround any sizable treatment of the nature of God and his relationship to man by his dual insistence on the stupendously rich, awe-inspiring Reality who, as prior to and other than man, forever assumes the initiative in revealing His Sovereign Love. His writings reveal, a tireless reiteration of the fact that "the Otherness, the Prevenience of God, the One-sided Relation between God and Man, these constitute the deepest measure and touchstone of all religion."[149] This central conviction and controlling

146. E&A II, p. 151
147. Ibid.
148. Ibid, p. 154
149. MER I, p. xvi

146. MKA II, p. 151
147. Ibid.
148. Ibid., p. 154
149. MKA I, p. xvi

presupposition of his thought is perfectly expressed in the words of the hymn:

> "I sought the Lord, and afterward I knew
> "He moved my soul to seek Him, seeking me;
> "It was not I that found, O Saviour true;
> "No, I was found of Thee."

In his treatment of the relationship of grace and free-will, von Hugel has drawn from St. Bernard and St. Thomas, the fountainheads of Roman Catholic "synergism." Thus, "God's grace acts in and through the medium of her acts (the soul's), inasmuch as these are good: so that the very same action which, seen as it were from without is the effect of our own volition; is, seen as it were from within, the effect of God's grace. . . . Grace and the Will thus rise and fall, in their degree of action, together; and man will never be so fully active, so truly and intensely himself, as when he is most possessed by God."[150] It is from his sources that Reinhold Niebuhr has concluded:

> The weakness of this Catholic "synergism" is that it defines the limits of human activity and responsibility and of divine grace too precisely and exactly, and places them too much on the same level; a weakness which pertains to all Thomistic analyses of the final mysteries. . . . The conception of the relation of grace and human resources in Reformation theology does justice to the ultimate and religious level of the problem; but it is in danger of obscuring the complexity of the relation by denying the reality of human freedom. The Catholic conception on the other hand seeks to do justice to both elements in the relation but it tends to comprehend them upon the same level and to measure the exact limits of each.[151]

Still, von Hugel is never satisfied with this neat balance.

150. MER I, p. 80. See also MER II, pp. 134-136, 281, 286-287; SL, p. 91
151. Niebuhr, R., THE NATURE AND DESTINY OF MAN, vol. II, pp. 118, 119

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151. Niebuhr, R., THE NATURE AND DESTINY OF MAN, vol. II, pp. 118, 119

A strong passage on the prevenience of God may frequently be seen following one of his attempts to correlate grace and freedom.[152] His favorite quotation from St. Bernard is: "Do you wake? Well, He too is awake, If you arise in the night time, if you anticipate to your utmost your earliest awaking, you will already find Him waking -- you will never anticipate His own awakeness. In such an intercourse you will always be rash if you attribute any priority, any predominant share to yourself; for He loves both more than you love, and before you love at all."[153]

Consequently, von Hugel exhibits a rare sensitivity to "Agape" as the "unmotivated" condescension of God to man. The Divine-Human Encounter "is <u>not</u> a simple or full intercourse between equals (in kind any more than in degree), where the movement from God to man can be understood by tracing it backwards, in the movement from man to God."[154] Rather, God Himself has come down to man, not half-way but the whole way.

> To put it in the most homely way: surely the infant does not feel its mother's breast a "half-way house," a queer artificial <u>intermezzo</u> between itself and its mother; but the infant feels that breast as the self-giving of that mother, as a self-compression, a touching condescension for bringing the mother's own life to the infant, and thus gradually to raise this infant to the mother's strength and stature. St. Augustine surely, surely had got this point right, in spite of the great attractions which, quite certainly, a purely spiritual religion possessed for wide stretches of his mind. He felt that it was this condescension, this coming down to us of God, His appearing to us in human form and ways, which 'nourished love and ousted inflation.'[155]

It was only in the light of this prevenient "Agape"

152. MER II, pp. 286,287
153. SERMONS ON THE CANTICLE OF CANTICLES lxix, 8
154. SL, p. 125
155. SL, p. 349

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152. MPH II, pp. 286,287
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that the thirst and striving of "Eros" could be understood. For "it is only because God is so really within us, only because of His prevenience and incarnation, that we find His traces in our need and our perception of Him variously everywhere."[156] Thus, we seek and love Him because He first loved, sought, and found us. In his discussion of Feuerbach von Hugel wrote: "The Reality, extant and acting upon and within the world distinct from the human mind, and upon and within those human minds and spirits themselves, can indeed be taken as the determining occasion, object, and cause of man's long search for and continuous re-finding of God; of the gradual growth in depth and in delicacy of man's religious apprehensions; of man finding his full rest and abiding base in the religious experience and certainty alone; and of man simultaneously becoming ever more conscious both of the need of the best, and of the inadequacy of all, human categories and definitions to express this really experienced Reality."[157]

Whereas von Hugel had lauded Immanual Kant as a striking example of a "modern man" who had penetrated the superficial views of the goodness of man and recovered much of the Biblical doctrine of sin, he also saw him as a classic example of the same modern man's inability to understand the Biblical conception of grace.[158] In the face of the prevenience of God as proclaimed by the Prophets, Psalmists, St. Paul, St. Augustine, and Pascal, Kant had seized the central difficulty concerning the exclusively divine acts within the soul. But

156. RG, p. 36
157. E&A I, p. 45
158. EL, pp.160-162

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his moralism blinds him to "the great fact, not of our own action, but of what renders that action possible, especially in forms and with notices too high and too wide for the world of simple sense or of unaided nature." Nevertheless, it is this sense of prevenience and grace which, as much as anything, won the humanity of the Roman Empire from Stoicism, with its "Monstro quod ipse tibi possis dare," to Christianity, with its, "Our sufficiency is from God." Stimulating, enlarging human friendship is used as an analogy of divine grace. "As a matter of fact, we daily, in a lesser degree, experience, in any and every deep and pure human intercourse, the soul-enlarging mystery of the awakening of our mind and will, to fuller life and fruitfulness, by minds and wills stronger, where they are also more devoted, than our own; hence there is nothing unreasonable, nothing even simply without experimental parallel for us, in belief in an action of God's Spirit awakening the depths of our own. Nor is the impossibility of deciding infallibly, at any moment, and concerning any particular thought or act, whether it is of Grace or of Nature, decisive, as Kant assumes; unless my inability to pick out infallibly precisely what I owe to my friend's influence is decisive against the reality of that influence, and stamps my belief in it as superstitious or unwholesome."[159]

Von Hugel sees this prevenience of the interpenetrating Spirit and the accompanying need on man's part for self-renunciation and suffering for the achieving of the true self as the "two eyes of religion and twin pulse-beats of its very

159. Ibid, pp. 161, 162

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159. Ibid, pp. 161, 162

heart." These have been realized, he is convinced, "with magnificent persistence and intensity, by the greatest of the Inclusive Mystics."[160]

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The spiritual life will be stifled if any of these seven facts are consciously and systematically excluded or denied. Still, no soul will be equally attracted to them all. "It will be quite enough -- indeed it will be the only wise course -- if each particular soul, at any period of its growth, attends positively, affirmatively and lovingly to two or three, or even to but one of these facts. Thus not any one soul, but the society of souls, the Church of Christ, will simultaneously apprehend and apply all these facts and truths. The Church's several constituents and organs will supplement each other, and will, collectively, furnish a full perception and a full practice of these great facts of God."[161]

160. MER II, pp. 394-396
161. E&A II, pp. 225, 226

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161. M&A II, pp. 225, 226

CHAPTER FIVE

THE MYSTICAL ELEMENT EXPRESSED IN THE LIFE OF CHRISTIAN DEVOTION

I. The Goal Of The Devotional Life

II. Von Hugel's "Techniques Of Realization"

III. The Ministry Of Spiritual Counseling

IV. The Conditions Of Spiritual Growth

V. The Dark Night Of The Soul

VI. The Missionary Approach

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No examination of von Hugel's interpretation of Christian Mysticism would be at all adequate which dealt only with his psychological analyses or philosphic constructions. Those who knew him most intimately and regarded him as an "uncanonized (and nearly excommunicated) Saint" would be the quickest to affirm that his most impressive interpretation of this phenomenon was to be found in the unique measure of his devotion to God in Christ which informed the whole range of his life's activities. The actual outworking of all that he so rigorously analyzed can be traced most readily in his personal devotional life and his ministry of spiritual counseling. It is here that one begins to penetrate the driving forces of that rare spirituality which enobled von Hugel to discerningly interpret the God-Man Encounter.

The materials for such a treatment are vast. Since the opening biographical chapter has already revealed his life as a unique embodiment of the three elements of the religious life, the present chapter will focus attention on those factors usually subsumed under the topic of "the devotional life." Even here the subjects must be restricted to those of the most general nature and those which most suggestively reveal this phase of von Hugel's interpretation of Christian Mysticism.

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I. The Goal Of The Devotional Life

Better than any rational proof are two descriptions which reveal that which was central and all-determining in the Baron's devotional life. Dr. Sauer, Rector of Freiburg University, said to von Hugel 's lifelong friend, Madame von Schubert: "He was one of the most remarkable of men, and, in consequence, not to be understood by such as knew him not intimately. I have seen him, after the sharpest critical argument, or after slashing away at some abuse or faultiness in clerical or church questions, go into the nearest Church and pray, rapt and absorbed like a saint -- or a child."[1] Abbot Butler has left the following description which is outstanding only because it so typically reveals "the real von Hugel:"

> For some twelve years, from 1894 to about 1906, while he lived at Hampstead, I used frequently to stay with him for three or four days. In the afternoon we every day went for a walk over the Heath; it was while 'Saint Catherine' was in the making, and he used to discourse of how the work was shaping itself in his mind, and develop the proposed treatment of the various parts, following up any train of thought that emerged -- Fenelon, Bossuet, Pere Grou, St. Teresa, -- or other favourites. Such talks were as walks over the mountains in the fresh keen breeze, in the light and warmth of the sun, in view of a panorama of wild scenery or spreading landscape -- exhilarating, bracing, deepening, broadening, uplifting: I have never experienced quite the same with any other man. And we always returned home by the little Catholic Church in Holly Place -- it was his daily practice -- and went in for a long visit with the Blessed Sacrament; and there I would watch him sitting, the great deep eyes fixed on the Tabernacle, the whole being wrapt in an absorption of prayer, devotion, contemplation. Those who have not seen him so know only half the man.[2]

For von Hugel the goal of the devotional life could be

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summed up in one word -- Adoration. For "religion, indeed, has ever been, at its fullest and deepest, Adoration, hence apprehension and affirmation of, and joy in, what already is."[3] While commenting on the absence of appreciation for the elements of worship and adoration in the Post-Hegelian Idealists von Hugel further defined his meaning. "And, after all, religion, in its most articulate and spontaneous utterances, is not directly a search for, a presentation of, the whole; still less a finding of man's own mind, or of mind in general, within or as that whole; nor a striving after self-realization; nor a sense that nothing really matters, except as merely out of place, or only for a time. But religion is, in such utterances, a sense, a love, an adoration, by spirits, conscious of their own distinctness and reality, of an Infinite Self-Conscious Spirit, a Reality distinct from and prior to themselves, through their original, infinitely penetrative source; a seeking of conformity by these real minds and wills with the Real Spirit; and a consciousness of, a contrition for, Sin -- a sense of the intrinsic difference between, and of the variously abiding results producible by, right and wrong volition and character-building."[4] When applied to the prayer-life this means that "the most fundamental need, duty, honour and happiness of man, is not petition, nor even contrition, nor again even thanksgiving; these three kinds of prayer which, indeed, must never disappear out of our spiritual lives; but <u>adoration</u>."[5] Von Hugel saw in adoration the essence of first-hand religious experience

3. EL, p. 160
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This elemental adoration is seen to issue in two effects. Subjectively, it is expressed in the quality of "expansive joy." For "the Divinely intended end of our life is Joy overflowing and infinite, a Joy closely connected with a noble asceticism."[7] Von Hugel believed that it was nothing short of a stroke of genius which led Pope Benedict XIV, in his standard work on the Beatification and Canonization of the Servants of God, to list the important fourth ingredient. The Roman Church requires for its formal canonizations a spontaneous popular cultus for one hundred years; three well-authenticated miracles; three well-authenticated acts of heroic virtue; and "the note of joy in the life and influence of the person who may be as melancholy by natural temperament as possible, but who must, somehow, be bracing, be expansive."[8] It is this quality in St. Teresa which entrances Christendom; not her long years of struggle and of suffering to be faithful to conscience, but "the rapt joy, the gracious spontaneity, the seeming naturalness of the supernatural, in the last years of her life-long service, a service which has at last become the fullest freedom."[9]

But adoration issues in something more constructive than a mere emotional extravagance. Objectively, it is expressed in the service of "creative Love." Only as man is "open" and "receptive," as in adoration, can the love of God be shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Spirit. This is the source of creative service. "A creative love is here required -- a love which loves, not in acknowledgement of an

6. Ibid., p. 6
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8. Bl, p. 301
9. Mea I, p. 18

already present lovableness, but in order to render lovable in the future what at present repels love. But where am I to find a motive sufficiently independent of my fellow-creature's actual repulsiveness and sufficiently strong to make me love him, the loveless and unlovable, into lovableness, unless in a love inspired by, and primarily directed to, a Reality at all times creatively loving, hence supremely lovable -- i. e. God?"[10] Adoration, then, produces no anemic religiosity. It is concerned not with a minimum of harmlessness but with a maximum of fruitfulness. " . . . . Holiness consists primarily, not in the absence of faults, but in the presence of spiritual force, in Love creative, Love triumphant, -- the soul becoming flame rather than snow, and dwelling upon what to do, give and be, rather than upon what to shun."[11] While a survey of the mystic tradition would reveal the predominant, and apparently most characteristic, trend toward an exclusive absorption in the direct relations between the soul and God their contribution toward the renovation of society must not be disparaged. "We have already seen how large has been the occupation, of precisely some of the greatest of the Saints, with Philosophy, with the larger Politics, and with economic questions. And the official Church especially has, from very early times, persistently conceived and practised life, not pietistically, but in a Catholic, i. e., an all-inclusive manner."[12]

Von Hugel thus conceives the goal of the devotional life along characteristically Roman Catholic lines, wherein

10. E&A II, p. 160
11. MER II, p. 238
12. EL, p. 333

10. MAA II, p. 160
11. MER II, p. 238
12. Ib., p. 393

the attainment of sainthood is realized through the complete surrender of the personality to God. But his goal is always "the Catholic personality," not a sectarian contraction. The saint, through whose transparent life the Divine Light shines, is "the Mature Man" in whom the Institutional, Critical, and Mystical elements are well developed and integrated. This "Catholic personality" is at opposite poles from the "character" who is isolated and marked by eccentricities. Rather he is universal in his interests and sympathies, responsive to every gleam of meaning, and unified through the totality of his abandonment to God. "The true exceptional is thus never the queer, but the supremely normal, and but embodies, in an exceptional degree, the deepest, and hence exceptional longings of us all."[13]

II. Von Hugel's "Techniques of Realization"

While von Hugel resisted all ascetic techniques which sought to grasp and control the Spirit of God he was not averse to devotional aids which conditioned the soul in receptivity and expectancy for the working of this Prevenient Spirit. Thus the "techniques" which served as the skeleton of his own devotional life are characterized by simplicity and freedom. His goal was always "asceticism without Rigorism and Love without Sentimentality."[14] The simple dignity of his devotional habits always expressed the mood of utter relaxation, never strain. "Never strain: if you fall into mortal sin, if you were dying -- never strain."[15] This free-

13. SL, p. 72
14. E&A I, p. 298
15. Letter to his wife, quoted in Bedoyere, op, cit., p. 28

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13. SL, p. 72
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dom and individuality in the question of "methods" is expressed in his letter "To J. M. (a young girl)" in 1911. "You will simply try to keep up, very conscientiously, whatever part of your religious programme, when in peaceful, unriled dispositions, your conscience makes you feel to be your attrait; and the rest you will not tilt against, -- indeed you will even try and starve all contrariness in yourself. To do only what, in one's best moments, we see to be the highest for ourselves, we see to help us most to feel little in our own eyes, and yet expanded and loving and forgiving, that is right; to do anything because it is not something else, or because it pays out others, or because it is the excess against some contrary excess, is always weakening."[16]

As a faithful Roman Catholic churchman, whose most severe trial in the modernist controversy was the fear of being deprived of participation in the Sacraments, von Hugel's devotional life is intimately linked with the conventional practices of Roman Catholic piety. He had only contempt for an aristocratic flight from democratic practices. "History teaches us quite plainly that there exists no such thing as strong and persistent religion without public worship, and no public worship which supports itself under and by pure contemptuous toleration or cheery matter-of-courseness. Public worship requires much care, much nurture: does it deserve all these pains? Why, of course, yes, and YES again."[17] But his was no fastidious slavery to ecclesiastical appurtenance. To Evelyn Underhill, who was tempted to an excess of institu-

16. SL, p. 194
17. LN, p. 186

16. SL, p. 194
17. IM, p. 186

tionalism, he wrote: "I fear as much for you the overdoing of Institutionalism, as the ignoring or even flying from it; indeed these two extremes are assuredly twin sisters in such a soul as yours. What I do pray for, for you, is that you should, in a time of peace and light, fix upon a certain minimum, a nucleus, of Institutional practice, to which you will then adhere with a patient perseverance, carefully not adding -- not much adding -- to it when in consolation; and not detracting -- not much detracting -- from it when in desolation."[18]

This freedom in, but not freedom from, institutional discipline can be clearly seen in his attitude toward Confession. He saw the essential, primitive, unchangeable part in obligatory Confession in case of Grave Sin. The Protestant Reformers had completely abolished the obligation while Anglican High Churchmen had come to recommend fairly frequent Confession in imitation of the late medieval and modern Roman Catholic habit. Von Hugel wished to preserve the valid element of obligation but in association with the element of freedom and conditionality. "I myself go every fortnight or every three weeks -- but this, simply because I feel I ought not to exempt myself from it."[19] Concerning the most fruitful way to make a confession he wrote to his niece: "Give yourself not more than fifteen minutes at most of quiet, leisurely circumspect, warm and loving preparation -- gently recalling the situations in which you have been since last confession: all this after, of course, asking Our Lord to give you light and love for seeing. If anything then pricks you -- keep that for your

18. SL, p. 345
19. LN, p. 142

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18. SL, p. 345
19. LN, p. 142

confession, always confessing first whatever may be most difficult to confess, then make a gentle, quiet, firm, but not straining, act of contrition. And after all this no deliberate recurrence to the subject. If nothing thus pricks you -- no strain, no trouble, no occupation with this fact."[20]

Along with his faithfulness in public forms of worship von Hugel maintained a simple but meaningful routine of daily, private devotions. This consisted of "spiritual reading" and prayer.

This type of reading would differ vastly from any other type in which one might engage. He has described this unique quality of devotional reading in a letter to a friend in 1916.

> Of course, such "reading" is hardly reading in the ordinary sense of the word at all. As well could you call the letting a very slowly dissolving lozenge melt imperceptibly in your mouth, "eating." Such reading is, of course, meant as directly as possible to feed the heart, to fortify the will, -- to put these into contact with God -- thus, by the book, to get away from the book, to the realities it suggests, -- the longer the better. And, above all, perhaps it excludes, by its very object, all criticism, all going off on one's own thoughts as, in any way, antagonistic to the book's thoughts; and this, not by any unreal (and most dangerous) forcing of oneself to swallow, or to "like" what does not attract one's simply humble self, but (on the contrary) by a gentle passing by, by an instinctive ignoring of what does not suit one's soul. This passing by should be without a trace of would-be objective judging; during such reading, we are out simply and solely to feed our own poor soul, such as it is hic et nunc. What repels or confuses us now, may be the very food of angels; it may even still become the light to our own poor souls in this world's dimness. We must exclude none of such possibilities, the "infant crying for the light" has nothing to do with more than just finding, and then using, the little light that it requires. I need not say that I would restrict you to only one quarter of an hour a day. You might find two such helpful. But I would not exceed the fifteen minutes at any one time; you will sink to ordinary reading, if you did. [21]

20. Ibid., pp. 179, 180
21. SL, p. 229

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20. Ibid., pp. 179, 180
21. Sl, p. 229

The question of *what* or *whom* to read reveals two seemingly contradictory principles in von Hugel's writings. On the one hand, his own reading suggests the widest possible range of books and authors. A list of those which he had used and recommended would read like a library list of mystical and devotional classics. On the other hand, he recommends the restriction to two or three "staples" which especially suit the *attrait* of the reader. Actually these principles are not contradictory, but represent two phases of an experimental process. Out of the wide reading of his early days he had discovered a few springs which served almost exclusively to quench the thirst of his later years. These consisted of the Psalms and the New Testament, especially the Gospels; the *Confessions* and the *Imitation*; and closely behind these, Fenelon's letters and the writings of Pere Grou.

But devotional reading must give way to prayer. Here again, moderation is necessary if fervour is to be sustained. For "certainly it is perseverance in the spiritual life, on and on, across the years and the changes of our moods and trials, health and environment; it is this that supremely matters."[22] Even as reading involved the discipline of a "definite time" so did prayer. The frequency and intensity of one's spontaneous prayer was related to the regularity and meaningfulness of one's scheduled prayer. Writing "To a Lady" concerning this in 1921, von Hugel said: "I should like a certain DEFINITE TIME GIVEN each day to DELIBERATE PRAYER which would not be much added to in times of conso-

22. IN, p. 67

lation, nor much detracted from in times of desolation. But such fixed time for prayer -- as over and above your Church doings -- should not be long. What you propose in your time-table will do very well indeed. Of course, we are talking simply of deliberate prayer -- whatever kind and degree of this suits you best -- i. e. most strengthens you to love, to work and to suffer, and most humbles yet braces you. For as to the spirit of prayer, inarticulate prayer, the prayerful disposition: this should more and more penetrate all your waking hours."[23]

Von Hugel was convinced that this period of prayer should include the use of <u>both</u> formal and spontaneous prayers, preferably in alternation. The advice of Huvelin and its successful adaptation is revealed in an autobiographical paragraph found in one of his later addresses. "After practising a daily three-point meditation for some twenty-five years, the new Helper sent me by God advised me that my prayer should now be mainly informal -- more of the prayer of quiet type; but that there should always remain short vocal prayers morning and night, Mass and Holy Communion twice a week, with Confession once a week or once a fortnight; and (perhaps most characteristic point of all) one decade of the rosary every day -- this especially to help prevent my interior life from losing touch with the devotion of the people. After over thirty years of this mixed <u>regime</u>, I am profoundly convinced of the penetrating sagacity of this advice."[24]

23. SL, p. 348
24. E&A II, p. 234

23. BL, p. 346
24. MMA IX, p. 234

Among the formal prayers which grew in meaning with its daily repetition was the prayer of St. Ignatius with which he began his day. "Receive, O Lord, my entire liberty -- my understanding, my memory, my will. From Thee I have received all things -- to Thee do I return all things. Give me but Thy Grace and Thy Love. I ask not anything else of Thee."[25]

This period of prayer would invariably issue in short ejaculatory prayers in the midst of the day's busiest activities. Concerning these javelin-like thrusts of the spirit he wrote to his niece: "I ask all this that you may mix with these admirations, more and more little exclamations of gratitude, of union with, of adoration of God, present in all this truth, beauty, and goodness. You could gradually develop this into spontaneous habit."[26]

While von Hugel wrote and spoke little concerning intercessory prayer his sensitive concern for the needs of others was intimately related to a large and much used "prayer list." His unusual effectiveness as a "Spiritual Counselor" must never be dissociated from this fact. A lady, a very old friend of his, wrote: "The very last time I saw him, in October, 1924, he was full of the old eager interest in all my dear and much-tried children and their families, and reminded me that for over forty years he had prayed three times a day for each and all of them with their little ones. I saw then that in his expression which convinced me that I should never speak to him again."[27]

Compared to the elaborate systems of techniques developed within the Christian mystic and ascetic tradition

25. LN, p. 4
26. Ibid.
27. Quoted in SL, p. 50

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von Hugel appears as the acme of simplicity. Yet such techniques as he employed are significant. His devotional life was characterized by freedom in experimentation, willingness to share the benefits of his own experience, and hesitation in encouraging others to accept as their own what he himself had found useful.

III. The Ministry Of Spiritual Counseling

Lucretius has given a vivid description of the torch race whereby successive generations of mankind, as they sink in death, hand on the torch of human knowledge and experience to the younger runners. But von Hugel believed that "the succession of spiritual example and training is, if less obvious, far deeper and more entrancing still. Here it is literally true that behind every saint stands another saint, at least as he lives on in writings by himself or about him. In vain do all mystics, as such, vividly feel their experience to be utterly without human antecedent connection."[28] This means "that usually one thoroughly trained spiritual soul has in the background another trained spiritual soul as its trainer."[29]

But the relation of the mystic to the Spiritual Director differs in three ways from that of the ordinary Confessor in the life of the more active or "mixed" type of Catholic. First, there is a more "striking variety and range, in the ecclesiastical and social position of the persons thus providentially given and deliberately chosen."[30] Behind Berthold of Regensburg is his Franciscan Novice-Master,

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29. LN, p. 111
30. MER II, pp. 362-365

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30. MKH II, pp. 362-365

David of Augsburg. The Secular Priest and Bishop, St. Francis de Sales, initiates the Religious Foundress, St. Jane Frances de Chantal, into the interior life. A Visitation Nun, Soeur Pelagie, is largely responsible for the deepened mystical spirituality of Jean Nicolas Grou, after he had spent twenty-four years in his Order. St. Teresa herself tells how "a saintly nobleman . . . . a married layman, who spent nearly forty years in prayer, seems to me to have been, by the pains he took, the beginning of salvation of my soul." Secondly, the souls of this type seem to realize more readily than others "that the 'blind obedience' towards such leaders, so often praised in their disciples and penitents, is, where wholesome and strengthening, essentially a simple, tenacious adherence, during the inevitable times of darkness and perplexity, to the encouragements given by the guide to persevere along the course and towards the truths which this soul itself saw clearly, often through the instrumentality of this leader, when it was in light and capable of a peaceful, deliberate decision."[31] It is recognized that the light must be seen by the disciple's own eye, even if it is God's light and mediated by the director. But granting this important fact, it is also understood that others have a better perspective for aiding us and discovering God's attrait for us than we do ourselves. Thirdly, souls of this type frequently tend "to exalt the office and power of the Director . . . . very markedly beyond the functions, rights and duties of the ordinary Confessor in the spiritual life of the ordinary Catholic."[32] The result seems to follow that in proportion as the abstractive movement is taken as

31. Ibid.
32. Ibid.

31. Ibid.
32. Ibid.

self-sufficient and the contemplative life is attempted with little reference to concrete, social helps and duties the soul approaches the danger-zone where no amount of Spiritual Direction can insure its safety or fruitfulness. On the other hand, when the outgoing movement towards multiplicity and contingency is incorporated into the life a purgation and check for the other movement renders superfluous any excessive predominance of direction.

Von Hugel's appreciation for and kinship to the great Seventeenth Century French Directors has been acknowledged.[33] His own amazing ministry grew out of the "trial and error" exercise and development of his special gifts. Although he lacked formal training for this delicate work, his enthusiastic appropriation of the contributions of science to religion would suggest his approval of much of the recent development in the field of religious counseling. He looked upon "the science of souls" as by far the richest in content and the most difficult because the most complex.[34] But, as always, his approval would be critical. To an Anglican who hoped that something of the spirit and ability of an Abbe Huvelin could be taught to seminarians von Hugel cautiously warned:

> I answered that certainly it would be well, more and more to improve such preparation; but that I was confident such men as Huvelin would always be rare, anywhere and at all times. That he himself, e. g. had derived only a fragment of what he was and became, from his technical seminary training; that I thought it would be well to teach the <u>average</u> Church student that there were -- there existed -- deep, rare souls, both amongst the laity and amongst the clerics, and to encourage such student to refer such rare lay-folk to the one or two deeply spiritual clerics he might be taught to know about. That if

33. Cpt. I, Section V
34. E&A I, p. 46

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33. Opt. I, Section V
34. MEA I, p. 46

> Anglicans managed to have, say, two such deeply spiritual clerics in each diocese, they should be esteemed richly favoured. That only great graces, many natural gifts, much suffering, and devoted heroism -- all this or much of all this combined -- would ever produce an Abbe Huvelin or a Cure d'Ars.[35]

Von Hugel's interpretation of the role of the Spiritual Counselor in the devotional life, reflected in his writings and personal experiences, can best be seen in relation to three cardinal principles of the counseling process.

1. The counselor must possess breadth of experience and the capacity for empathic participation in the struggles of the counselee.

It was this capacity which made von Hugel "lay-Bishop" to such a wide variety of people in such varied circumstances. A. E. Taylor, in commenting on von Hugel's ETERNAL LIFE, testifies to this unusual breadth of experience which he also brought to all counseling situations. "It is this independence of 'private judgement,' in the bad sense of the term, which before everything else strikes me as giving Baron von Hugel's book its singular value. One is sure that in studying religion, with him as a guide, one is dealing not with what one individual with the peculiarities of individual temperament has found an adequate faith, but with something which has proved sufficient for the needs of countless myriads of all shades of intellectual and moral difference."[36]

But his was more than intellectual breadth. He possessed in a rare degree that capacity for <u>participation</u> mystique, which enabled him to "feel his way into" others' problems and establish immediate rapport. In writing to

35. LN, p. 159
36. <u>Guardian</u>, Feb. 6, 1925

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Father Tyrrell during the stress of the modernist controversy he emphasized this all-important phase of the counseling procedure, which his own ministry exemplified so well. "You are a mystic; you have never found, you will never find, either Church, or Christ, or just simply God, or even the vaguest spiritual presence and conviction, except in deep recollection, purification, quietness, intuition, love . . .. And your helping others, <u>any soul alive</u>, depends upon your keeping or regaining those convictions. Hence these dispositions; not all the wit, vehemence, subtlety, criticisms, learning that you can muster (and <u>how</u> great they are!) will ever, without those, be other than ruinous to others as well as to yourself."[37]

2. The counselor must be ceaselessly aware of the diversity of souls and be able to vary his approach and methods with each individual.

The most difficult lesson for von Hugel to learn, as a counselor, was that "souls are never dittos." But once having learned this lesson it became the largest single factor in his success as a Spiritual Counselor. On a few occasions he emphasized rough classifications for souls. There were those in whom the institutional, intellectual, or mystical element was predominant.[38] He further described as both types and stages what may roughly be called Secular Liberals, Christian Legalists, and Christian Liberals.[39] But in most of his writing and all of his later counseling experience he was keenly sensitive to "the great difference,

37. Von Hugel to Tyrrell, Dec. 7, 1908, quoted in Bedoyere, op. cit., p. 219
38. MER I, Cpt. II.
39. Ibid., pp. 242, 243

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37. Von Hugel to Tyrrell, Dec. 7, 1908, quoted in Nedoyere, op. cit., p. 219
38. MHR I, Cpt. II.
39. Ibid., pp. 242, 243

in spiritual range and depth, in special attrait and peculiar calls and gifts, unchangeably inherent in each soul's vocation to what it is, and still more to what God would have it become."[40] It was his aim to emulate the wise rose-gardener who succeeded by treating each bush according to its individual need. "So with souls: let us, without undue self-occupation, learn to discriminate between them and, again, between them all and ourselves, so as both to respect and encourage <u>their</u> ways, however different from our own, and to persevere and improve in <u>our</u> ways, however lonely these ways may be."[41]

It was this failure to recognize the diversity of souls and the operations of the Spirit of God which vitiated much of the efforts of the Quietists. In spite of his deep appreciation for elements in the movement, von Hugel criticized them for this insensitivity. "It is impossible not to feel that the manifold great ocean-waters of life, that the diversely blowing winds of God's Spirit are here, somehow, expected to flow and breathe in a little short-cut, single channel, through a tiny pipe; one more infallible recipe or prescription is here offered to us, hardly more adequate than the many similar "sure" roads to salvation, declared by this or that body of devout religionists to attach to the practice or possession of this or that particular prayer or particular religious object."[42]

3. The counselor must possess self-denying consecration to keep the counselee free from excessive attachment or

40. E&A II, pp. 231, 232
41. Ibid., p. 232
42. MER II, p. 146

in spiritual range and depth, in special interests and peculiar calls and gifts, unchangeably inherent in each soul's vocation to what it is, and still more to what God would have it become."[40] It was his aim to emulate the wise rose-gardener who succeeded by treating each bush according to its individual need. "Go with souls: let us, without undue solicitation, learn to discriminate between them and, again, between them all and ourselves, so as both to respect and encourage <u>their</u> ways, however different from our own, and to preserve and improve in <u>our</u> ways, however lonely these ways may be."[41]

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3. The counselor must possess self-denying compassion to keep the counselee free from excessive attachment or

40. SMA II, pp. 231, 232
41. Ibid., p. 232
42. MMH II, p. 160

imitation.

Von Hugel called this element of detachment (which is as necessary as empathy in the counseling process) one aspect of the "large double death to self on the part of the life-bringing soul."[43] He had learned from experience that "the golden rule is, to help those we love to escape from us; and never try to begin to help people, or influence them, till they ask, but wait for them. Souls are never dittos. The souls thus to be helped are mostly at quite different stages from our own, or they have quite a different attrait. One should wait silent for those who do not open out to us, who are not intended, perhaps, ever to be helped by us -- except by our prayers (the best of all helps.) We must be tolerant and patient, too, with those we can, and ought to help. This difference in souls wakes us up, and makes us more sensitive and perceptive. Many women are better helped by women than by men. Yet how few women are sufficiently trained interiorly to be able to help wisely!"[44]

The second aspect of this death to self in the counseling process was the realization that only the essence of what the counselor seeks to communicate will be appropriated by the counselee.

> The life-bringing soul must already, then discriminate within itself between the essence of what it has to say and the accidents, the particularities, which clothe the utterance of this essence; and it must peacefully anticipate the acceptance at most of that essence, and not of these accidents. And then, after the communication, this soul must be ready actually to back the other soul in the non-acceptance even of the essence of the message, if there is evidence that the other soul is not really helped, but is hindered, at least for the time being,

43. IN, p. 27
44. Ibid., p. xxix

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3. IM, p. 27

4. Ibid., p. xxix

> by this essence now offered to it. And, as already said, at best, only that essence can and should be taken over by this other soul, and the light-bearing soul, even then, must at once be busy helping the less experienced soul to clothe the newly won essence in clothing from the wardrobe of this other soul.[45]

The Spiritual Counselor, then, must be catholic in his interests and understanding, discerning in his analysis of the human heart, and selfless in his consecration to the highest good of the counselee. These are precisely the qualities which von Hugel stresses in treating the secret of spiritual persuasiveness. The only life that will be persuasive in our times is a life "sufficiently large and alive to take up and retain, within its own experimental range, at least some of the poignant question and conflict, as well as of the peace-bringing solution and calm: hence a life dramatic with a humble and homely heroism which in rightful contact with and in rightful renunciation of the Particular and Fleeting, ever seeks and finds the Omnipresent and Eternal; and which again deepens and incarnates (for its own experience and apprehension and for the stimulation of other souls) this Transcendence in its own thus gradually purified Particular."[46] When the multiplicity of experiences is minimized the result is a "Thing," simple, static, "safe," or "correct," "rather than a vivid, formally unified, and dynamic growing Personality."[47] When the unification of experiences is eliminated the result is the break-up of all genuine recollection and harmonization. "But in neither case will the life be persuasive. For to be truly winning, the soul's life must become and must keep itself full and true."[48] In terms

45. Ibid., p. 27
46. MER I, p. 368
47. Ibid.
48. Ibid.

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45. Ibid., p. 272
46. MMK I, p. 308
47. Ibid.
48. Ibid.

of the classification previously noted, it is not the large majority of Christian legalists who have recognized and accepted duty and obligation and are now thus striving to serve God who are persuasive. Rather it is the minority of Christians in whom "the Universality, Obligation, Uniformity, and Objectivity" of the previous stage "takes the form of a Spiritual Individuality, Liberty, Variety, and Subjectivity: Personality in the fullest sense of the term has now appeared . . . . And at this stage only do we find a full persuasiveness."[49]

It is the presence of this "entrancing" historical phenomenon -- the succession of Spiritual Counselors behind each saint -- which led Josiah Royce to acknowledge the mystics as the "spiritual counselors of humanity."[50]

IV. The Conditions Of Spiritual Growth

Von Hugel had no static conception of man's spiritual life; man was constantly being summoned to response. "And, up to the end, there will be no standing still, but only the alternative between shrinkage and expansion; between the deteriorating ultimate pain of self-seeking and self-contraction, and the ennobling immediate pangs of self-conquest and self-expansion."[51] As such, the fundamental pre-condition of all expansion is the attitude of "openness" and expectancy. "It is by my not denying as false what I do not yet see to be true, that I give myself the chance of growing in insight."[52] Von Hugel emphasized this in simple

49. Ibid., pp. 242, 243
50. Royce, J., THE WORLD AND THE INDIVIDUAL, p. 191
51. SL, p. 89
52. E&A I, p. 14

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50. Royce, J., THE WORLD AND THE INDIVIDUAL, p. 191
51. EH, p. 89
52. EMA I, p. 14

terms at the beginning of "the experiment in reconstruction" with his niece.

> This is doubtless the chief reason why so few minds grow in their outlook after, say, eighteen or twenty-one: they are so busy, pompously affirming to themselves and others that they don't and can't see this or that -- that this is not, and that can't be -- as to harden down, for good and all, into their narrow, stuffy little world . . . . I so love to watch cows as they browse at the borders, up against the hedges of fields. They move along, with their great tongues drawing in just only what they can assimilate; yes -- but without stopping to snort defiantly against what does not thus suit them. It is as though those creatures had the good sense to realise that those plants which do not suit them -- that these will be gladly used up by sheep, goats or horses; indeed, that some of these plants may suit them -- the cows -- themselves later on. So ought we to do: not sniff and snort at what we do not understand here and now; not proclaim, as though it were a fact interesting to anyone but ourselves, that we do not, here and now, understand this or that thing; but we should just merely, quite quietly, let such things stand over, as possibly very true, though to us they look very foolish -- as indeed, possibly, things that we ourselves will come to penetrate as true and rich indeed. In a word, we can and should be sure of all that is positive and fruitful for us in our outlook; sure, also that whatever really contradicts <u>that</u> is false. But as to possible further truths and facts, we will leave ourselves peacefully docile and open.[53]

One of von Hugel's most important treatments of this theme is a chapter in THE REALITY OF GOD entitled, "Moral Perfection Conceived As A Becoming Like To God." The following passage presents the core of his analysis of the growth process.

> God intends us to be strong, each with our own degree of strength, to possess our own individuality, our genuine autonomy, the more the better, everything else being satisfactory and equal; yet nothing can be more certain than that, in proportion as we insist upon growing simply from within, upon attempting to be ourselves simply through ourselves, or rather in our failing through this, the more we remain thin and small, the more our being ourselves means really

53. LN, pp. 23, 24

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This is doubtless the safer reason why so few minds grow in their outlook after, say, eighteen or twenty-one: they are so busy, ponderously attuning to themselves and others that they don't and can't see this or that -- that this is not, and that can't be -- as to harden down, for good and all, into their narrow, stuffy little world . . . . I so love to watch cows as they browse at the borders, up against the hedges of fields. They move along, with their great tongues drawing in just only what they can assimilate; yes -- but without stopping to snort defiantly against what does not thus suit them. It is as though those creatures had the good sense to realize that those plants which do not suit them -- that these will be gladly used up by sheep, goats or horses; indeed, that some of those plants may suit them -- the cows -- themselves later on. So ought we to do: not sniff and snort at what we do not understand here and now; not proclaim, as though it were a fact interesting to anyone but ourselves, that we do not, here and now, understand this or that thing; but we should just merely, quite quietly, let such things stand over, as possibly very true, though to us they look very foolish -- as indeed, possibly, things that we ourselves will come to penetrate as true and rich indeed. In a word, we can and should be sure of all that is positive and fruitful for us in our outlook; sure, also that whatever really contradicts that is false. But as to possible further truths and facts, we will leave ourselves peacefully docile and open.[53]

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53. IN, pp. 23, 24.

> to be something thoroughly insignificant. We have to grow, to grow not only in sincerity to our actual best light and sincere outlook, but we have to gain in light and to be ready to exchange one outlook for another in proportion as God gives us the opportunity. What matters, then, is more what we contrive to get than what we have, and more in our awareness that what we have has somehow been given. Certainly every soul requires a certain distance, a certain space within which to become itself, but it never becomes itself by the aid of itself alone. And, again, a man's foes are primarily those of his own household, that is, the passions and insensibilities of his own soul, so that to long and to work to become free from self is the primary work of self-liberation for every soul.[54a]

Two aspects of spiritual growth are depicted here, as elsewhere in von Hugel's writings. Positively, growth consists of the effective integration of widening areas of knowledge and experience. Negatively, growth consists of the continual and increasing purgation of debilitating self-centeredness.

The unification of multiplicity is the life-long process of producing "The Mature Man" or "The Catholic Personality." Von Hugel testified: "My own experience now when my life is twenty times as full as it was at eighteen, yet it is much more unified and recollected. The great rule is, Variety up to the verge of dissipation: Recollection up to the verge of emptiness: each alternating with the other and making a rich fruitful tension. Thus we gather honey from all sorts of flowers, then sort out, arrange, unify and store, the honey gathered. After which we again fly out on our honey-gathering expeditions. What an immense activity was Fenelon's: and a still larger activity St. Augustine's! Yet both were deeply recollected men." [54b]

This was the basis for his insistence on the increasing

54a. RG, pp. 111, 112
54b. LN, pp. xxi, xxii

incorporation of non-religious interests and activities in the life "for the sake of religion itself."[55] An over-vehement counselee would likely be met by a humiliating request to "try a little gardening;" or, in female patients, "some quiet needlework." Growth would take place most effectively in the areas where such harmonization involved the most "costing" tension. Therefore he saw in biological science and the historical criticism of Biblical materials the most challenging opportunities for intellectual growth in his day. To take seriously the Christian missionary responsibility was to assume a strategic position for growth. For Christianity in its catholic expression "is essentially a missionary, an aggressively universalistic religion, hence inevitably a spirituality that learns as well as teaches, that acquires and assimilates as well as one that moulds and gives. For you cannot teach the man whom you do not understand; you cannot win the man with whom you cannot share certain fundamental presuppositions."[56] Growth would also occur through the enriching of the content and the increasing of the tension in the polarity of world-affirmation and world-denial. "The active and the contemplative life are, ultimately, but two mutually complementary sides of life, so that no life ever quite succeeds in eliminating either element, and life, caeteris paribus, is complete and perfect, in proportionmas it embraces both elements, each at its fullest, and the two in perfect interaction; the Negative, Abstractive way peremptorily requires also the other, the Affirmative,

55. E&A I, p. 62; see also LN, pp. xxii, 80
56. Papal Com. op. cit., p. 47

55. RSA I, p. 62; see also IN, pp. xxii, 80

56. Papal Com. op. cit., p. 47

Concrete way; the Quiet, Passivity, Emptiness are really, when wholesome, an incubation for, or a rest from, Action, indeed they are themselves a profound action and peace, and the soul is primarily a Force and an Energy, and Holiness is a growth of that Energy in Love, in full Being, and in creative, spiritual Personality."[57]

But growth is no strained, feverish accumulation of knowledge and experience. The mood of calm and relaxation must pervade the process. St. Catherine's "one thing at a time" and Fenelon's insistence upon doing the one thing in an environment of peace and non-hurry are necessary conditions of growth.[58] "Dissipating chatter" is incompatible with spiritual growth, whereas "to learn interior silence, the not talking to self--our little notions petted as our own, etc. -- is fundamental in the attaining of the spiritual life."[59] Nor is growth restricted to, or wholly dependent upon, conscious striving. Rather, "man attains in religion, as truly as elsewhere -- once given his whole hearted striving -- in proportion as he seeks not too directly, not feverishly and strainingly, but in a largely sub-conscious, waiting, genial, expansive, endlessly patient, sunny manner."[60] This corresponds to the "gutliche nicht grimmige Ernst" of the great German medieval mystics. Von Hugel compared the Quietist's emphasis with William James' conclusion that spiritual growth may be actually interfered with by efforts too direct and energetic.[61] "No wonder then that Quietism, finding this element of quiet incubation much ignored and starved in the

57. MER II, pp. 249,250
58. LN, pp. 108, 109
59. Ibid., p. 46
60. E&A II, p. 60
61. James, W., THE VARIETIES OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE, pp. 205,206

concrete way; the quiet, tenacity, kindliness are really, when unconscious, an incubation for, or a test from, action, indeed they are themselves a profound action and peace, and the soul is primarily a force and an energy, and holiness is a growth of that energy in love, in full being, and in creative, spiritual personality."[57]

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57. MKR II, pp. 249,250
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59. Ibid., p. 49
60. RRA II, p. 60
61. James, W., THE VARIETIES OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE, pp. 205, 206

lives of most religious souls, flew to the other extreme, of making this inarticulateness and wise indirectness of striving into the one test and measure of the perfection of all the constituents of the religious life, instead of insisting upon various degrees and combination of full and direct consciousness and articulation, and of much dimness and indirect alertness, as each requiring the other, and as both required by the complete and normal life of the soul."[62]

The second aspect of spiritual growth consists of the increasing renunciation of inordinate self-centeredness. This is the negative side of that progress which consists "in the degree to which that variety of acts would become informed and commanded by the supreme motive of all motives, Pure and Perfect Love."[63]

This "death to self" is a major theme in mystic writings. Von Hugel is in basic agreement with this tradition when he affirms that "the fundamental cleavage in the soul's life is not between things successive, -- between the Now and the Then, and at the point of death; but between things simultaneous, between the This and the That, and at the point of sin and self-seeking."[64] If this <u>is</u> the "fundamental cleavage," then it follows that the primary function of religion "is not the consoling of the natural man as it finds him, but the purification of this man, by effecting an ever-growing cleavage and contrast between his bad self, and the false, blind self-love that clings to that self, and his good true self, and the true enlightened self-love that clings to the true self."[65] Therefore, "the distinctively religious act

62. MER II, pp. 149, 150
63. Ibid., p. 168
64. MER I, pp. 238, 239
65. SL, p. 72. For the distinction between true and false self-seeking see E&A II, p. 154

62. MHR II, pp. 149, 150
63. Ibid., p. 166
64. MHR I, pp. 238, 239
65. SL, p. 72. For the distinction between true and false self-seeking see MHR II, p. 134.

is, as such, an unconditional surrender."[66] Von Hugel's request for the prayers of his niece expresses this basic yearning for emancipation from exaggerated self-assertion: "Pray for your Uncle to become very, very humble -- to disappear from one's own sight -- with just God and souls: and one's little self one of these souls; how glorious that would be."[67]

Von Hugel had found in suffering, both physical and mental, a potent purgative for the petty self. Not that suffering automatically would produce this effect; but it could be thus utilized and transfigured. This he had experienced and this he taught. Following a severe illness and operation in 1918 von Hugel's daughter, Hildegard, wrote concerning the Baron to Bishop Edward Talbot: "He has been too wonderful, speaking of what a splendid school suffering is and how it teaches one more than any amount of learning, -- how he feels these days have been given to him to get nearer the great Realities, and that if he is spared he feels that all this will only deepen and strengthen his work by a greater and deeper experience of the greatest Grace, Suffering. It is wonderful to see his face all illumined with joy when he speaks of it, though he is so weak and exhausted."[68]

In this perpetual and deepening surrender of self, von Hugel saw the most delicate interpenetration of both grace and free will. Any complete description of the "death of self" includes both factors. "Here the simply Individual is transformed into the truly Personal only by the successive

66. MER I, p. 71
67. LN, p. 93
68. SL, pp. 255, 256. On the relation of suffering and faith see also: LN, p. 183; MER II, p. 292; E&A I, pp. 109, 110.

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66. MER I, p. 71
67. LN, p. 93
68. Bl, pp. 255, 256. On the relation of suffering and faith see also: LN, p. 183; MER II, p. 292; MER I, pp. 109, 110.

sacrifice of the lower, of the merely animal and impoverishingly selfish self, with the help of God's constant prevenient, concomitant, and subsequent grace. And here this constantly renewed dropping and opposing of the various lower selves, in proportion as they appear and become lower, to the soul's deepest insight, in the growing light of its conscience and the increasing elevation of the moral personality, involves that constant death to self, that perpetual conversion, that unification and peace in and through a continuous inner self-estrangement and conflict, which is the very breath and joy of the religious life."[69]

Von Hugel's interpretation of self-surrender is realistically free from two enticing illusions. On the one hand, his insistence on "constant death" and "perpetual conversion" differentiated him from those who stressed a temporal state of complete self-eradication, such as dogged the tradition of Methodist perfectionism. There will <u>always</u> be the necessity to "die, day and night, to self."[70] On the other hand, his understanding of the persistence of a valid <u>self-hood</u> in the most intimate state of "union" differentiated his self-surrender from prevalent pantheistic versions. "The Self-Surrender here is not a simply final resolution, of laboriously constituted centres of human spiritual consciousness and personality, back into a morally indifferent All, but a means and passage, for the soul, from a spiritually worthless self-entrenchment within a merely psycho-physical apartness and lust to live, on to a spiritual devotedness, an incor-

69. MER I, p. 76
70. LN, p. 135

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69. MER I, p. 76
70. IM, p. 135

poration, as one necessary subject, into the Kingdom of souls,--the abiding, living expression of the abiding, living God."[71]

Von Hugel did not hesitate to treat the most human conditions operating in spiritual growth. But the conditions which man could meet were always set in the context of the Prevenient Spirit of God. Like Paul and Spollos, man could both plant and water. But in the final analysis "God gave the increase."[72]

V. The Dark Night Of The Soul

In the analyses of the mystics full recognition has been given to the chaotic and transitional period generally referred to as "The Dark Night of the Soul." This period, or periods, of blankness and impotence, characterized by Christian mystics as the Entombment which precedes the Resurrection, assumes a variety of forms. To those souls in which consciousness of divine companionship is predominant the "mystic death" involves both the personal "Absence of God" and the apparent withdrawal of the impersonal support of the transcendent Ground or Spark of the soul. To those emphasizing the subjective idea of "Sanctity" the pain of the Night comes as a dreadful lucidity revealing the soul's helpless imperfection. Frequently it is experienced as emotional lassitude characterized by the dismal condition of spiritual ennui, or "aridity." At times the Night sets in as a kind of moral dereliction or stagnation of the intellect. In over-vehement souls it may take the form of an insatiable and inordinate

71. MER II, p. 334
72. I Corinthians 3:6

poration, as one necessary subject, into the Kingdom of souls,--
the abiding, living expression of the abiding, living God."[71]

Von Hugel did not hesitate to treat the most human conditions operating in spiritual growth. But the conditions which man could most were always not in the context of the Preveniant Spirit of God. Like Paul and Apollos, man could both plant and water. But in the final analysis "God gave the increase."[72]

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71. MER IX, p. 334
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passion to "see God" accompanied by periods of acute depression. The mystics are neither oblivious to, nor satisfied with, the psychological explanation which depicts the Night as due to the exhaustion of an old state and the "growing pains" of the process of unification. Rather they have concentrated on ways of turning these psychic disturbances to spiritual profit. Consequently they see the Night as the most drastic of God's methods to cure the soul of "spiritual gluttony," whereby Reality is confused with the joy given by the contemplation of Reality. This, which the German mystics called the "upper school of true resignation" or of "suffering love," represents the most effective purgative for the rebellious self. The most vivid autobiographical description of this phenomenon is that of Heinrich Suso, from the twenty-second chapter onwards in his "Life." The foremost analysis of this condition is that of St. John of the Cross in his ASCENT OF MT. CARMEL and THE DARK NIGHT OF THE SOUL.

Von Hugel persistently ignored the ladder of purgation, illumination, and unification with the Dark Night inserted between the second and third rung. Like St. Catherine of Genoa, he follows the current in Psyeudo-Dionysius which insists upon direct contact between the soul and the transcendent God, and ignores the other, which bridges over the abyss between the two by carefully graduated intermediaries.[73] Nevertheless he frequently treats "the times of dryness" and his letters reveal vigorous attempts to help sustain others through the Dark Night until the dawn of a new day.

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73. MER II, pp. 98, 99

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73. MMR II, pp. 98, 99

Sadhu Sundar-Singh, provoked thought on this theme. He found the Sadhu "to be a fine, firm character -- a devoted will, but to have curiously little mind."[74] What most abashed the Baron was that "he told me himself, upon my questioning him very carefully on the point that, during the thirteen years since he has been a Christian, he has never, not even for some moments, experienced spiritual dryness, spiritual desolation."[75] Von Hugel could only conclude that either he had not made clear what "spiritual desolation" meant, or else the Sadhu was unimaginably ignorant of the oscillations of his own spiritual life.

Von Hugel saw the Dark Nights, for he emphasized these as recurring phenomena of the devotional life, as especially appropriate times for the exercise of the institutional element of the religious life. In the midst of the Dark Night "it is of much help to have some older, more experienced soul handy also, who can and will, if and when we get into Desolation, cheer us on, by the reminder of the former consolation, and still more by the great fact that only through such vicissitudes -- through fidelity in them -- can we grow strong and deep in God and for Him."[76] The illusion of self-sufficiency is thrown into bold relief during these times even as the supporting power of the institution is enhanced. "What happens in the normal, that is the historical and institutional religious life, is that, during the periods of obscurity, the soul lives in a very true sense in the faith of its fellows until fresh light makes it in its turn support

74. LN, p. 148; see also LN, p. 82; SL, p. 301
75. LN, p. 148
76. Ibid., p. 47

74. IM, p. 146; see also IM, p. 82; SL, p. 301
75. IM, p. 148
76. Ibid., p. 47

the others. No man is sufficient to himself, not in shoemaking, not in printing, not in advertising: it is only in the deepest of all things, in religion, that we hear men talk and write, more often than is pleasant, as though it were sufficient for them to cut themselves off from all others to think and to write good sense."[77]

An autobiographical passage reveals both the illustrations which sustained von Hugel through his long Nights and the type of homely advice he would give to a harassed soul.[78] At the age of eighteen he found it helpful to liken the "pilgrim's progress" to the quiet, regular, short step of the experienced mountain-climber, in contrast to the inexperienced townsman who alternates between enthusiastic starts and dead stops. During the thick mists the expert will halt, camp out under some slight cover brought for the purpose, quietly smoke his pipe, and move on only when the mist has cleared away. In his thirties he utilized the image of the preparations one made for a stormy sea voyage. A few sturdy, appropriate things were selected and placed with a view to the possibility of forthcoming storms. So, too, would his spirituality be cultivated especially in view of "dirty" weather. In his forties he added to these the figure of a camel trip across a huge desert. During the sandstorms it was necessary to dismount, prostrate oneself face downward with head covered until the storm subsided. Then, and only then, the journey could be continued. "You see, whether it be great cloud-mists on the mountain-side, or huge, mountain-

77. RG, p. 144
78. IN, pp. 85-88

77. HO, p. 144
78. LM, pp. 85-88

high waves on the ocean, or blinding sandstorms in the desert: there is each time one crucial point -- to form no conclusions, to take no decisions, to change nothing during such crises, and especially at such times, not to force any particularly religious mood or idea in oneself. To turn gently to other things, to maintain a vague, general attitude of resignation -- to be very meek, with oneself and with others: the crisis goes by, thus, with great fruit. What is a religion worth which costs you nothing? What is a sense of God worth which would be at your disposal, capable of being comfortably elicited when and where you please? It is far, far more God who must hold us, than we who must hold Him. And we get trained in these darknesses into that sense of our impotence without which the very presence of God becomes a snare."[79]

Distressing as the Dark Nights could be, and for certain temperaments they were almost unendurable, von Hugel declared them "irreplaceably profitable" for weaning the soul from the domination of the petty self.

VI. The Missionary Approach

An integral aspect of the life of Christian devotion is the articulation of the Gospel to the non-Christian world. This poses the ever vital question of the missionary approach. Nedoncelle has discerned an important element of von Hugel's ministry when he says, "his field of action lay chiefly outside the visible limits of the Church -- as the missionary of Christianity to the intellects of men."[80] Von Hugel

79. Ibid., pp. 86, 87
80. Nedoncelle, op. cit., p. 9

79. Ibid., pp. 86, 87

80. Nedoncelle, op. cit., p. 9

would frankly admit his lack of authority and originality in the fields of comparative religion and missions. On the opening page of his ETERNAL LIFE he acknowledges his limitations. "The present writer cannot pretend to any first-hand experience, or knowledge of, the Oriental religions, and must restrict himself to a reproduction of some translations of texts and of the most sober conclusions maintained by careful and sympathetic specialists in these difficult subject-matters, with simply the addition of certain general applications of his own."[81] Nevertheless, the synthesis he makes of the materials at his command, and the relation of this to his philosophy and ministry are significant and must not be overlooked.

A survey of both popular and supposedly sophisticated thought on the subject of the missionary approach revealed two pathetic extremes. "It looks as though the world were divided between fervent practising religionists, and these would recognize only one spot, their own religion, within which the truth can really be found, and philosophical theorists, speculators about religion, who, indeed, find some truth everywhere, but practise any one truth nowhere."[82] Von Hugel rejected with equal vehemence the older Absolutism which conceived Christianity as all Light and the only Light in contrast to the consistent darkness of all non-Christian life, and the current Relativism which in its professed liberal-mindedness monotonously "leveled-down" all religions to an equality. Conversely, his own missionary approach

81. EL, pp. 7,8
82. RG, p. 145

81. KM, pp. 7,8
82. RO, p. 145

sought to give full recognition to two irreducible convictions. "Recognition, persistent, frank and full, of elements of real truth and goodness, as more or less present and operative within all the fairly mature and ethical forms and stages of religion throughout history and the world. These elements indeed all come from God and are all intended to lead to God, the One God of all truth and of all creation. Yet this recognition requires, as its constant companion, an equally definite conviction as to the unequal richness in such elements as they are furnished even by the greater religions or indeed the world-religions."[83] Thus he rejects the "Either-or" alternative to the question of Continuity-Discontinuity, in favor of a more discriminating "Both-And."

Von Hugel believed his treatments of this subject to be largely an application and republication of the principles set forth by the Protestant missionary to India, J. N. Farquhar, and the Spanish Jesuit, Cardinal Juan de Lugo, who taught theology in Rome "under the eyes of Pope Urban VIII" at the end of the seventeenth century. Von Hugel was loud in praise and frequent in the recommendation of Farquhar's THE CROWN OF HINDUISM.[84] This is the book which Nicol Macnicol says, "initiated a new missionary era in which the relationship between the Christian message and the messages of the ethnic faiths is recognised as being a relationship of human striving and divine fulfilment."[85] This work is valuable both because of its accurate learning and also because it crystallized and helped precipitate into

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84. E&A I, pp. 6, 7, 60, 269
85. Macnicol, N. IS CHRISTIANITY UNIQUE?, p. 9

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actual missionary policy views about the relation of Christianity and the non-Christian religions which were widely held and gaining increasing recognition during the early years of this century. Farquhar's approach rests upon the following four convictions. (1) There is a certain underlying unity in all religions as there is in the manifestations of every other human function. (2) The condition under which a man reaches God is utter sincerity to the light which he has. This implies the necessity of continued response and obedience to new light. (3) The good work done, and saints produced by all religions must be generously acknowledged. Their values must be conserved. (4) The differences in religions, which many consider negligible, are of large importance. Every thinking man sees clearly the superiority of the great religions over the lowest faiths. The Christian sees as distinctly the superiority of Christianity to the rest of the great religions; and he believes the evidence can be set forth with overwhelming force.[86]

In Cardinal de Lugo von Hugel saw the truly Catholic position for which "actual life cries aloud."[87] De Lugo stated that, according to Catholic doctrine, God gives light sufficient for its salvation to every soul that attains to the use of reason in this life. While God could resort to a miraculous intervention for man's salvation it would seem that this was not His method. Over against the human soul, with its God-given affinity for and need

86. Farquhar, J. N. THE CROWN OF HINDUISM, pp. 26-33
87. E&A I, pp. 63; 92, 93; 234, 235; 252, 253; EL, pp. 350 351; RG, pp. 149-151

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87. RMA I, pp. 63; 92, 93; 234, 235; 252, 253; ML, pp. 350-351; RO, pp. 149-151

of truth, there stand the various philosophical schools and religious bodies which all contain and hand down, amid various degrees of human error and distortion, some gleams and elements of divine truth. "Now what happens as a rule is simply this: the soul that in good faith seeks God, His truth and love, concentrates its attention, under the influence of grace, upon these elements of truth, be they many or few, which are offered to it in the sacred books and religious schools and assemblies of the Church, Sect, or Philosophy in which it has been brought up. It feeds upon these elements, the others are simply passed by; and divine grace, under cover of these elements, feeds and saves this soul."[88]

Von Hugel's desire to acknowledge the work of the Spirit of God, wherever found, is no grudging condescension. Rather, the very existence of a Special Revelation and Catholicism presupposes a broad base of General Revelation and fragmentary insight. "For though Christianity and Catholicism be the culmination and fullest norm of all religion, yet to be such they must find something thus to crown and measure: various degrees of, or preparations for, their truth have existed long before they came, and exist still, far and wide, now that they have come."[89] One of von Hugel's best attempts to relate "preparatory" and "final" revelation and Christ and culture is found in his address, "The Apocalyptic Element In The Teaching Of Jesus." The following lengthy quotation is included because it

88. E&A I, p. 252; De Fide, Disputatio xii, no. 50, seqq.
89. MER I, p. xxv

88. EKA I, p. 252; De Vide, Disputatio xii, no. 50, sedp.
89. MKH I, p. xxv

gathers together much which is found scattered fragmentarily through his writings. After speaking of the historical development of Christological thought, he says:

> Yet it can be wisely maintained by us only if we simultaneously remember that, however truly God revealed Himself with supreme fullness and in a unique manner in Jesus Christ, yet that this same God had not left Himself, still does not leave Himself, without some witness to Himself throughout the ages before Christ, and throughout the countries, groups, and even individual souls, whom the message, the fact, of the historic Jesus has never yet reached, or who, in sheer good faith, cannot understand, cannot see Him as He really is. TheUnincarnate God has thus a wider range, though a less deep message, than the Incarnate God; and these two Gods are but one and the same God, Who, mysteriously, mostly slowly and almost imperceptibly, prepares or supplements, expresses and otherwise aids Himself, in each way by the other way. Thus though of course far from all that passed and passes for Religion in Paganism can be held by us to be, in its degree and manner, true and right -- to be capable of Christianisation, indeed itself to serve the fuller apprehension and service of God and of man; yet some of the great Greek thinkers' thinking, of the great Roman lawyers' legislation, of the Graeco-Roman later religious philosophies and cults, in very deed sprang from the Unincarnate God to serve and supplement the God Incarnate. Only thus can we be freed from anxiety, and can we sincerely rejoice and be confirmed in our faith in God the Omnipresent, when we discover how largely the Old Testament Book of Wisdom borrows from Plato, how appreciable is St. Paul's indebtedness to the Greek Mysteries, how much in the form of the Fourth Gospel comes from Philo, how greatly Tertullian learnt from Roman Law, how important was St. Augustine's indebtedness to Plotinus, how almost wholesale was the Dionysian writer's incorporation of Proclus, and how systematic and gratefully avowed was St. Thomas of Aquino's utilisation of Aristotle. Doubtless these appropriations varied in their carefulness, necessity and permanent value; yet even this most incomplete list surely indicates that the process in general was as legitimate as it has proved fruitful. Christianity could not otherwise have lived and thriven in this world; and only those who can manage to figure to themselves the world as forsaken by the very God Who made it, and Who sent to it His Son, can, in strictness, be disquieted by such preparations by God Himself for His own fully incarnate coming.90

90. E&A I, pp. 134, 135. On the importance in Buddhism of both the Wheel of Reincarnation and Nirvana, see E&A I, p. 89

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In speaking of the "intolerance" of Christianity at a meeting of The Committee To Inquire Into Religion In The Army in 1917, von Hugel concluded by saying: "It is a certain kind, the supreme kind, of incarnation (which gives their completion, interpretation, and standard to all those lesser preveniences) that we find and adore in the incarnation of Christ. If you raise Christ simply outside of every other manifestation of God, there is a danger of thinking, 'Because my flesh is not my spirit, it is simply bad.' Because Plato and Socrates were not Christ, they are not sheer nothings; still less are Amos, Isaiah, or Akiba sheer nothings. It will not do; -- it will not do! Plato's and Socrates' work was a touch of the real God working within them; and still more was this the case with those great Jewish prophets and teachers whom, with the Synagogue, the Christian Church reveres."[91]

Nor was this gradual preparation for, and God's revelations preceding His fullest self-revelation in Christianity to be applied only to the succession of history. It was also to be seen in the simultaneous present. "This holds still of those imperfect, mixed forms and degrees of light, in so far as they continue distinct in the world. The synagogue here in Bayswater is still now, on 11 December, 1918, a fragmentary but very real revelation of God and, however unconsciously, a very real pedagogue to Christ. The little mosque at Woking is still, for some souls, a yet more fragmentary but still real revelation of God and teacher of truths more completely

91. Quoted in SL, pp. 65, 66. On his interpretation of St. Paul's failure to do full justice to his Jewish heritage, see RG, pp. 20, 21

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For the missionary approach to steer its course between the Scylla of relativistic indifference and the Charybdis of absolutistic fanaticism is no simple assignment. Nevertheless, "unless the whole Christian Church is wrong in insisting upon the Old Testament as the Word of God, unless St. Paul was wrong in preaching God to the heathen Athenians as 'Him Whom they had ignorantly worshipped,' and unless our Lord Himself was wrong in coming, 'not to be ministered to, but to minister,' some such attitude cannot but be the right one, however difficult to our poor human passions it may persistently remain."[93]

Along with this breadth which aligned him with the early Apologists, von Hugel was careful to penetrate to the valid element sometimes overlooked in the approach of radical discontinuity. "Yet, here also, we must not forget the impressive strength, the deep element of truth underlying even the excesses of the older position; it most rightly saw that the different religions were different not only in matter of no moment, but that they were different in their several places within a great scale of worth and power."[94] Here, especially, the smallest gain in value was of the utmost significance. He believed that such a missionary approach as he advocated neither relieved the evangelist of responsibility nor in any way leveled down or dampened the missionary

92. LN, p. 8, 9, 56. See also E&A I, p. 236
93. E&A I, pp. 61, 62
94. RG, p. 14

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ardour. "Buddhism does not become equal to Mohammedanism, nor Mohammedanism to Judaism, nor Platonism to Christianity, nor Socinianism, or even Lutheranism, to Catholicism. It merely claims that everywhere there is some truth; that this truth comes originally from God; and that this truth, great or little, is usually mediated to the soul, neither by a spiritual miracle nor by the sheer efforts of individuals, but by traditions, schools and churches. We thus attain an outlook, generous, rich, elastic; yet also graduated, positive, unitary, and truly Catholic."[95]

When pressed to spell out the uniqueness of Christianity von Hugel revealed his usual caution against over-simplification. One of the best statements of his belief is found in his chapter on "The Three Chief Forces Of Western Civilization" in the first volume of THE MYSTICAL ELEMENT.[96] "As to Christianity, it is really impossible to compare it directly with Hellenism, without at once under-stating its originality. For its originality consists not so much in its single doctrines, or even in its teaching as a whole, and in the particular place each doctrine occupies in this teaching, as in its revelation, through the person and example of its Founder, of the altogether unsuspected depth and inexhaustibleness of human Personality, and of this Personality's source and analogue in God, of the simplicity and yet difficulty and never-endingness of the access of man to God; and of the ever-preceding condescension of God to man. Hence if Christianity is thus throughout the Revelation of Per-

95. E&A I, p. 253
96. MER I, pp. 25-39

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spiritual miracle nor by the sheer efforts of individuals,
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outlook, generous, rich, elastic; yet also grounded, positive,
unitary, and truly Catholic."[95]

When pressed to spell out the uniqueness of Christianity
von Hügel revealed his usual caution against over-simplifica-
tion. One of the best statements of his belief is found in
his chapter on "The Three Chief Forces of Western Civiliza-
tion" in the first volume of THE MYSTICAL ELEMENT.[96] As to
Christianity, it is really impossible to compare it directly
with Hellenism, without at once under-stating its originality.
For its originality consists not so much in its single doc-
trines, or even in its teaching as a whole, and in the par-
ticular place each doctrine occupies in this teaching, as
in its revelation, through the person and example of its
Founder, of the altogether unsuspected depth and inexhaus-
tibleness of human Personality, and of this Personality's
source and analogue in God, of the simplicity and yet
difficulty and never-endingness of the access of man to God;
and of the ever-preceding condescension of God to man. Hence
it Christianity is thus throughout the Revelation of Per-

95. LEA I, p. 253
96. MEM I, pp. 25-39

sonality; and if Personality is ever a One in Many, (and more deeply One and more richly Many, in proportion to the greatness of that spiritual reality): then we need not wonder at the difficulty we find in pointing out any one particular doctrine as constitutive of the unique originality of Christianity."[97] But, while no one particular doctrine could epitomize this uniqueness, it did inhere in the fact that "a Person came, and lived and loved, and did and taught, and died and rose again, and lives on by His Power and His Spirit for ever within us and amongst us, so unspeakably rich and yet so simple, so sublime and yet so homely, so divinely above us precisely in being so divinely near."[98]

Von Hugel was not so presumptuous as to believe that this missionary approach, consisting of the dual emphases on the non-interchangeableness and uniqueness of Christianity and the grateful appreciation of the lesser lights and helps God gives His children, would "solve" or make simple the missionary task. But he firmly believed it must be along these lines that the ever-urgent task must be pursued. "I may well have failed adequately to combine these twin truths; yet only in some such, though more adequate apprehension and combination resides the hope for the future of our poor storm-tossed human race, -- in a deep fervour without fanaticism, and a generous sympathy without indifference."[99]

To his niece he said, "I want to make the most of whatever light people have got, however slight it may be, to strengthen and deepen whatever they already possess, if I

97. Ibid., pp. 25, 26
98. Ibid., p. 26
99. Ibid., p. xxvi

97. Ibid., pp. 25, 26
98. Ibid., p. 26
99. Ibid., p. xxvi

can."[100] Such was the passion and approach of Baron Friedrich von Hugel who, through the instrumentality of critical and consecrated scholarship and spiritual counseling, served in his generation as "the missionary of Christianity to the intellects of men."

100. LN, p. x

100. IN, p. x

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION:

THE RELEVANCE OF VON HUGEL'S INTERPRETATION OF CHRISTIAN MYSTICISM

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The timeless challenge of mysticism has become timely. The historical periods especially conducive to the mystic drive are seen to follow the reign of seeming order and security. The unveiling of the contingent character of those cultural forms which had seemed permanent constitutes the soil-preparation for the cultivation of mysticism. There are numerous pyschological similarities between our times and the Fourteenth Century which witnessed the destruction of the Medieval Synthesis and the high-water mark of mystical activity in Christian Church History.[1] The unquenchable passion for the Absolute is increasingly kindled in contemporary life by the insecurities of the times.

This current thirst finds expression in many forms. It can be seen in "The Lure and Slavery of Nationalism," whereby qualified loyalties are made the objects of fanatical unqualified devotion. This longing for the authoritative Absolute can be seen in the testimonies of many recent converts to Roman Catholicism. Herman Bahr's HIMMELFAHRT is not exaggerated. Gertrude von Zezschwitz, daughter of a famous theologian of Erlangen and herself a Lutheran deaconess for many years, tells of her conversion to the Roman Church under the influence of Cardinal Newman's autobiography: "One who has grown weary of the confusion and

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This current thirst finds expression in many forms. It can be seen in "The Lure and Slavery of Rationalism," whereby qualified loyalties are made the objects of fanatical unqualified devotion. This longing for the authoritative Absolute can be seen in the testimonies of many recent converts to Roman Catholicism. Herman Bahr's HINGEN ZARHT is not exaggerated. Gertrude von Zezschwitz, daughter of a famous theologian of Erlangen and herself a Lutheran deaconess for many years, tells of her conversion to the Roman Church under the influence of Cardinal Newman's autobiography: "One who has grown weary of the confusion and

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contradictions which are evident in every school of Protestant doctrine finds rest in the unity of the Roman Church. This great fellowship of faith, of worship, and of prayer makes it possible to look back very sadly on Protestantism, rent by schism and lacking in much that is necessary."[2] Whereas certain periods, such as those which witnessed the rise of the Renaissance and the modern scientific spirit, are wearied with the oppression of the Absolute and characterized by an insatiable yearning for the relative, others, like our own, have become wearied with the relative and long for the Absolute. Karl Heim has felt the pulse of this movement and assessed its relationship to mystical activity. "We have all gone hungry through generations of scientific observation, experiment, and calculation; of historical research in the dust of the libraries; of exploration among the fossil remains of a dead past; of reflection on an age of philosophy which produced nothing more than a theory of knowledge and a Kantian terminology. Now we are all seized by a primitive longing for life, for something which will set us free from all speculations. We are thirsting once more for that immediate contact with the universe which was the goal of the romantics. . . . "[3]

Reflections of this thirst are found in abundance in the philosophy and religious life of our times. Aldous Huxley's PERRENIAL PHILOSOPHY can be best appreciated by contrast with the religious and scientific interests of previous generations of Huxleys. Alan W. Watts in THE

2. WARUM KATHOLISCH, p. 14
3. Heim, K., SPIRIT AND TRUTH, pp. 17, 18

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SUPREME IDENTITY, published in 1950, diagnoses the disintegration of modern civilization as due to its lack of a principle of unity which would yield a certain or workable knowledge of the meaning and true end of life. He believes such a unifying principle is to be found in metaphysical knowledge, which leads to an effective realization and immediate experience of the Ultimate Reality. He finds the techniques of Zen Buddhism to be amazingly relevant to the solution of current conflicts. Recent reprints of the writings of such mystics as Eckhart and Boehme, plus many minor figures, have produced results surprising to the most optimistic publisher. The numerous publications since 1948 relating to William Law constitutes but one example of the contemporary appeal of this literature. Retreats and cell groups, both lay and clerical, have achieved outstanding popularity in both Roman Catholic and Protestant church life. Seminary seminars dealing specifically with "The Mystics" have become common. These, and many such evidences, can be seen as "Signs of the Times."

In the face of such a situation, so fraught with potentialities for a great creative spiritual movement or for a wholesale dissipation of valuable energies, a more thorough consideration of the relation of the Christian faith to mysticism is imperative. This is nowhere more true than within the framework of Protestantism. To simply set all things Christian in opposition to all things mystical is to offer a stony dogma to a hungry world. And yet the ease with which this has been done is astounding. To pit Bib-

lical Faith against all Greek Thought and Mysticism (Brunner); Prophetic against Mystical Prayer (Heiler); agape against Eros (Nygren); is to leave the most serious and necessary task unfinished. In most cases it has not been seriously tackled. The pathos of Protestantism in this regard can be seen in the statement of Wilhelm Hermann, teacher of many contemporary Protestant theologians: "If Protestant theologians today think that they cannot part company with mysticism, then they really admit that they cannot free themselves from Roman Catholicism. For in Roman Catholicism mysticism is the essential life of religion."[4] Fortunately, Paul Tillich is heard as a voice crying in the theological wilderness: "Therefore, it is a mistake when Protestant theologians from Ritchl to Barth, establish an absolute contrast between mysticism and faith."[5]

Nor is the Protestant failure to take this question seriously simply an academic matter of no practical consequence. One area where the practical consequences have been most keenly felt is that of the missionary enterprise in Asia. W. E. Hocking's unforgettable description of the inner conflicts of the Japanese Christian of Tendai Buddhist background is too symptomatic to be easily dismissed. In contrast to his former associates in the monastery who studied philosophy, knew the value of meditation, and possessed the capacity to listen, this convert found the missionaries both uninterested in philosophy, and too busy making reports to be able to meditate or converse. "They gave the impression of persons always hurried, always

4. Hermann, W., COMMUNION OF THE CHRISTIAN WITH GOD, p. 27
5. Tillich, P., THE PROTESTANT ERA, p. 77

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harrassed by many duties, devoid of repose, devoid of inner peace, devoid of opportunity to cultivate the sense of depth, solemnity, mystery in the vast world, which more and more became to him an essential of religion."[6] In short, the mystical element appeared to be quenched in these missionaries. It came as a refreshing surprise to learn that the Christian tradition had produced the THEOLOGIA GERMANICA.

Current Protestant thought concerning the missionary approach has largely consisted in furthering the debate between Hocking and Kraemer. In this connection the attitude of these representatives toward both Oriental and Christian Mysticism is revealing. For Kraemer, the prophetic faith of Biblical realism is set in sharp contrast to the "primitive apprehension" which finds its classical expression in the naturalistic-monism of the Indian and Chinese cultures. Thus Christian and Mystical faith, while revealing seeming similarities, spring from a radically different orientation. "Mysticism in the typical sense of the word, either in its theopanistic, contemplative or emotional form, does not occur in the prophetic religion of Biblical realism."[7] Hocking, on the other hand, points to the inadequacies of "The Way of Radical Displacement" and presents "The Way of Reconception," which escapes the evils of a naive syncreticism by the more inclusive and radical synthesis of a growing religion characterized by individuality, organic unity, and consistency.[8] Mysticism represents a "common

6. Hocking, W. E., LIVING RELIGIONS AND A WORLD FAITH, p. 162
7. Kraemer, H., THE CHRISTIAN MESSAGE IN A NON CHRISTIAN WORLD, p. 359
8. Hocking, W. E., LIVING RELIGIONS AND A WORLD FAITH

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Even as most Protestant missionaries have sought to "find a way between Hocking and Kraemer" so, in viewing the question of mysticism from the perspective of the missionary situation, each of these treatments of mysticism must be both affirmed and denied. With Hocking it will be necessary to affirm the common ground of experience from which all mysticism arises and the need for Christianity to cease apologizing and take seriously its mystical heritage. But it will be necessary to delineate more precisely the factors essential in a Christian Mysticism. With Kraemer it will be necessary to affirm that the crucial fact on which alone a missionary movement can rest is "that God has revealed <u>the</u> way in Jesus Christ and wills this to be known through all the world."[10] Christianity, then, is not simply another version of the Perennial Philosophy. At the same time, Kraemer's radical discontinuity must be evaluated as an understandable but never finally satisfying, excess.

While the problems inherent in the phrase "Christian Mysticism" are of vital significance for any age they have become especially urgent in these times. But many factors will determine whether or not the present potencies will be channeled for constructive ends. Among these factors one of the most important is the quality of the philosophical and spiritual guidance upon which this period will draw. The

9. Hocking, W. E., THE MEANING OF GOD IN HUMAN EXPERIENCE, p. 352
10. Kraemer, op. cit., p. 107

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exposition of this thesis has been based upon the conviction that the work of Baron Friedrich von Hugel offers the most fruitful source of guidance for current Christian thought.

Von Hugel may be viewed as the brightest luminary in that galaxy of students of mysticism who have revived this field as one demanding serious and critical thought. Among others such a list would include the names of Leuba, James, Delacroix, Underhill, Inge, Poulain and Butler. But even amidst these experts von Hugel stands out for the breadth of his knowledge of Christian thought and the penetration of his insight into the problems raised. The following evaluation by Evelyn Underhill of his THE MYSTICAL ELEMENT is indicative of the esteem in which he was held by his own contemporaries. "Indispensable. The best work on Mysticism in the English language."[11] Von Hugel was appreciated in his own generation. At the same time, especially in England, his influence has been growing steadily since his death. There are many indications that von Hugel's work, like that of Kierkegaard and P. T. Forsyth -- whose writings he knew well prior to their period of "popularity," will become even more influential in this generation than in his own. While the major contributions of his life and thought have been enumerated throughout the thesis the following summary will indicate the major emphases which reveal the relevance of his interpretation.

1. Von Hugel's interpretation of Christian Mysticism

11. Underhill, E. MYSTICISM, p. 498

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1. Von Hügel's Interpretation of Christian Mysticism

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posits the existence of two distinct centers of consciousness in every phase of "The Divine-Human Encounter."

Nicolas Berdyaev has seen the basic problem of mysticism to reside in the question of personality, as an aspect of the problem of the One and the Many. Since mysticism always tends to move from multiplicity to the One, "the most delicate problem which faces mysticism is that of its attitude towards the problem of man and of the world, that is, of the world in all the multiplicity of its creation."[12] For von Hugel the via unitiva does not abolish the distinction of "likeness in difference" between the Creator and the creature. The union of love is not an identification of substance but a difference in harmony. Since, for him, the least inadequate analogy is that of the love-encounter, up to a point this may be compared with J. E. Turner's remarks on the identity of substance and identity of function in the progress of real knowledge. Subject and object interpenetrate one another though always remaining distinct. "It may be compared to the relation of man and woman in an ideal marriage . . . . a functional and not a substantial identity; neither of the two turns into the other, but each on the contrary becomes all the more himself or herself; yet this independent individual development remains throughout reciprocally controlled, and is, like the resultant unity, all the more effective on that account."[13]

At the same time, his critical understanding of the validity of anthropomorphisms enabled him to appreciate the valid corrective of the Negative Theology. While God is

12. Berdyaev, N. FREEDOM AND THE SPIRIT, p. 261
13. Turner, J. E. ESSENTIALS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF RELIGION, London, 1934, p. 166

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never less than what we conceive as personal, He may be infinitely more "in this direction." He can, therefore, be thought of as <u>esse ipsum</u> as well as "personalist Other."

2. Von Hugel's interpretation of Christian Mysticism is Theo-centric, emphasizing the living but unchanging character of God over against the mystic as the primal cause and incentive of his experience.

As much as Karl Barth, but with a more judicial balance, von Hugel focussed his attention and that of his readers upon the Divine Initiative as seen in God's Creative and Redemptive activity. While not disparaging the responding activity of the creature-subject, von Hugel emphasized the free and prevenient action of God as against all merely evolutionary or emergent theories of spiritual transcendence. This was stressed not simply as a reaction, due to current theological necessity, but because of the inherent priority of this element of "given-ness" in all genuine religious knowledge. While the mystic life involves organic growth its first term must always be sought in ontology. For the real sanction of the mystical life does not inhere in the fugitive experiences or even the transformed personality of the mystic, but in the Originating Subject whose apprehension of man is the basis of man's apprehension of the Divine. Von Hugel's is, thus, a mysticism of grace.

As such, his attempt to utilize a critical realism as a better philosophical background to the experience of the mystics than the previous vitalism is significant. He realized that determinism was no longer the foremost enemy

with which to contend. Rather, he saw the chief threat in a shallow doctrine of immanence unbalanced by an adequate sense of transcendence and set within the framework of a naturalistic monism. It was against this that he set himself. Nevertheless, the truth which he sought to express did not depend for its validity upon the rise or fall of any philosophic framework. For all alike bear the marks of successiveness and reveal their continual need of criticism.

3. Von Hugel's interpretation of Christian Mysticism distinguishes the mystical as one element of the religious life continually demanding integration with other elements for its most creative expression.

Emil Brunner has briefly and **suggestively** surveyed the history of the Christian Church from the standpoint of the oscillation from Objectivism to Subjectivism. Objectivism may take the form of either sacramentalism or intellectualism. Subjectivism may be seen in either its pragmatic or pietistic versions. The sight of this tiresome spectacle leads him to cry out, "Beyond Orthodoxy and Pietism, Biblical Faith!"[14] Von Hugel has likewise analyzed these elements. The objective factors he distinguished as the historical-institutional and the critical-philosophical element. His sense of "beyond" the various truncated versions of the Christian life can be seen in his conception of The Mature Man or the Catholic Personality. For him the institutional, intellectual and mystical elements must be integrated in a fruitful and "costing" tension. Nor are the inevitable one-sided developments to be necessarily disparaged -- because

14. Brunner, E., THE DIVINE-HUMAN ENCOUNTER, p. 40

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Von Hugel's analysis of this tri-polar relationship of elements has far-reaching implications for an interpretation of Christian Mysticism. By this means of distinguishing the mystical as one element but not the entirety of the religious life he is able to maintain the importance of the mystical element without capitulating to a gnostic revelry for elite "pure spirits." Mysticism is, thus, democratic as well as aristocratic in Berdyaev's sense. It is an element represented variously in every man and can be either quenched or cultivated. The mystical cannot dispense with the institutional and maintain its vigor or balance. In Christianity it is inseparably linked with the historical and can never be systematized as "timeless truth." Social service is not looked upon as a competition for the energies of the mystic but the inevitable expression of The Mature Man. Thus in the terminology of John Oman, the interpretation of Christian Mysticism in the writings of von Hugel finds the Natural to be, not a threat to, but a medium for the revelation of the Supernatural. Von Hugel rightly sees the aim of the Christian Mystic as the spiritualizing not the annihilation of the "natural" man. His interpretation is based upon a profound understanding of the importance of the dual love commandment. As in the lives of St. Francis of Assisi and St. Seraphim of Sarov, von Hugel seeks to maintain <u>both</u> the love of God and the love of neighbor, which God has joined together but which man continually puts asunder.

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But this is not to suggest, as von Hugel would never have suggested, that his interpretation is in any sense an exhaustive treatment of the subject. He would think of his work as an introduction to, rather than a "final" statement of Christian Mysticism. Not only are some of the problems "unsolved;" some important ones have not been raised. While limitations and over-emphases in his interpretation have been observed in the exposition of his thought, it is necessary here to indicate one area in which supplementation is urgently needed.

The following lines from his remarks at a meeting of The Committee To Inquire Into Religion In The Army are indicative of this practically uncultivated area. "Let us not underline St. Paul too much; he is the first of our cataclysmic converts -- do take him, for Heaven's sake, 'cum grano'!"[15] Throughout his exegeses St.Paul can be seen as a veritable "blind spot" for von Hugel. But to take him "cum grano" also runs the risk of taking certain of his problems "cum grano;" problems which may have a significant bearing upon the subject of Christian Mysticism. One such problem, raised by St. Paul's analysis of sin and salvation, is the relationship between the doctrines of Atonement and Mystical Union with Christ. The comprehensiveness of the Apostle's thought has frequently overwhelmed his would-be interpreters. Consequently, "the many-colored wisdom of God" has obscured in a mass of partial and one-sided reconstructions. The result has been the failure to appreciate the

15. SL, p. 65

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centrality and significance of St. Paul's Christ-Mysticism. More discerning interpreters, however, have seen the decisive importance of this for an understanding of both the Atonement and Christian Mysticism. H. R. Mackintosh is convinced that "union with Christ is a brief name for all that the apostles mean by salvation. For St. Paul and St. John oneness with Christ is to be redeemed, and to be redeemed is oneness with Christ . . . . the classical Christian experience, not a peripheral eccentricity."[16] Professor C. E. Raven's conclusion about St. Paul is that "his many-sided philosophy is based upon the belief that such personal union achieved by faith and consummated in love is the essence of religion. . . . Life 'in Christ' is not peculiar to St. Paul and is indeed the essential and creative element in Christianity."[17] James S. Stewart projects his A MAN IN CHRIST upon the assumption that "until we realize the central place which this always held in Paul's thought and experience, many of the richest treasures of his Gospel must remain sealed from our sight." He then submits an impressive array of evidence to substantiate his optimism that "the tendency of Pauline study in recent years has been to give increased attention to this most vital element of the apostle's religion."[18]

The nucleus of St. Paul's atonement and ethical thought is to be found in the pregnant phrase , which incorporates the relationship of the Messianic-eschatological Kingdom of God and regenerative union with Christ, the con-

16. THE PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST, p. 334
17. JESUS AND THE GOSPEL OF LOVE, pp. 296, 301
18. A MAN IN CHRIST, p. 150

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16. THE PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST, p. 374.
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ception of the New Creation, the sense of dying and rising again with Christ, the subtle distinction between Christ-Mysticism and a God-Mysticism which he purposely avoids and the interpretation of life "in the Spirit." It is this "vital union with Christ" which differentiates Christian redemption from magical and mechanical misinterpretations. The doctrine of justification can only be safeguarded from antinomianism when it is seen in the light of union with Christ whereby the sinner identifies himself with Christ in his attitude to sin. Likewise, sanctification becomes an inconsequential appendage when severed from its organic relationship to union with Christ. "Only when union with Christ is kept central is sanctification seen in its true nature, as the unfolding of Christ's own character within the believer's life; and only then can the essential relationship between religion and ethics be understood. In short, the whole meaning of the atonement is here at stake."[19]

It is not surprising that von Hugel's failure to seriously grapple with St. Paul's Christ-Mysticism is paralleled by the conspicuous absence of interest in the doctrine of the Atonement. For von Hugel, the relationship of man's predicament and God's resources is understood along characteristic Roman Catholic lines. The orthodox interpretation of the person and work of Jesus Christ and the place of the Mass are assumed with practically no comment. This area of unconcern is related to the ambiguity discovered in his writings between his clear enunciation of

19. Ibid, pp. 152, 153

the difference between sin and finiteness on the one hand, and his even more frequent insistence that the fundamental category of human analysis is that of nature and supernature, not sin and grace. But to take St. Paul "cum grano" at this point is to treat superficially the most profound source of insight for a Christian Mysticism. For this primitive Pauline Christ-Mysticism was and will remain the fountainhead of a genuinely Christian Mysticism as distinguished from recurring Neo-Platonic versions. While incorporation of this Pauline orientation would not invalidate von Hugel's interpretation it would substantially supplement it at a crucial point.

Albert Schweitzer has produced a searching examination of this phase of the Apostle's thought in his THE MYSTICISM OF PAUL THE APOSTLE. In spite of the same exaggerated eschatological bias which characterized his earlier work he has rightly seen the importance of this for the life of the Christian Church and for an interpretation of Christian Mysticism. The crucial importance of a contemporary appropriation of this Christ-Mysticism is affirmed in the following summary: "The renewing of Christianity which must come will be a return to the immediacy and intensity of the faith of Early Christianity. No doubt a reintegration of Primitive-Christian faith as such is impossible, because it was embodied in temporally-conditioned conceptions to which it is impossible for us to return. But the spiritual essense of them we can make ours. This we can do in proportion as we toilfully win for ourselves a living faith in

the Kingdom of God, and realize ourselves within this as men redeemed by Christ . . . . Great has been the work as a reforming influence which Paul, by his doctrine of justification by faith alone, has accomplished in opposition to the spirit of work-righteousness in Christianity. Still greater will be the work which he will do when his mystical doctrine of being redeemed into the Kingdom of God, through union with Christ, begins to bring quietly to bear upon us the power which lies within it."[20]

The necessity of returning to St. Paul rather than Plotinus in order to tap the well-spring of Christian Mysticism prompts the observation that, while von Hugel's thought needs supplementation by a more adequate incorporation of the Pauline Christ-Mysticism, one of the distinguishing features of his interpretation is the degree to which Biblical thought actually does triumph over classical categories. This can be seen most pointedly wherever he treats "The Three Fundamental Dogmas of the Early Church." The doctrine of creation is affirmed in his analysis of time and eternity whereby the temporal process is declared meaningful without being treated as self-sufficient or illusory. The doctrine of the incarnation is affirmed in his treatments of the necessity of sense for the revelation of Spirit and the uniqueness of the revelation in Jesus as the Christ. The doctrine implied in "the resurrection of the flesh" is affirmed in his insistence upon two distinct centers of self-consciousness persisting in every phase of the God-Man relationship.

20. Schweitzer, A., THE MYSTICISM OF PAUL THE APOSTLE, pp. 384, 385

Perhaps the best evidence for the triumph of Biblical thought and its pervasive importance for a Christian Mysticism can be seen in von Hugel's sensitivity to what J. V. Langmead Casserley has termed "the problem of the singular." Greek thought had dismissed the singular as something which was incapable of becoming the object of knowledge. Even the "realistic" Aristotle declared that "perception must be of a particular, whereas scientific knowledge involves the recognition of the commensurate universal."[21] But there is a profound distinction between the term "particular" and the term "singular." "The 'particular' is the individual as seen by the man who is looking for the universal, and who will feel baffled intellectually until he finds it; the 'singular,' on the other hand, is the individual seen from the point of view of the man who is out to capture and enjoy the full flavour of its individuality."[22] The emergence of Christianity demanded the logic of the singular to do justice to its philosophy of history and its conception of "personality" in God and man. But when dealing with the unique the essential mode of apprehension and expression is paradox. It has been one of the fruitful ventures of the past century to explore this use of paradox, even as the "way of negation" and the "way of analogy" had been subjected to discerning scrutiny in earlier epochs of Christian thought. Von Hugel did not explore the use of paradox from the semantic point of view. But his use of <u>both</u> the way of negation and the way of analogy, as previously described, clearly indicates his awareness of the underlying problem with which he was dealing. The two "ways"

21. POSTERIOR ANALYTICS, 87B, 28
22. THE CHRISTIAN IN PHILOSOPHY, p. 31

are not two distinct, or even opposed, ways of approaching the mystery of the Divine Being, but two aspects of a single way of approach which is profoundly paradoxical. The way of analogy cannot be pursued without denying the limitations inherent in the finite image which is utilized. Likewise, there is always an element of affirmation lying at the roots of negation. It is this understanding of the singular as derived from the Hebraic-Christian tradition which is the foundation of von Hugel's interpretation. The suggested corrective would imply a more thorough-going appreciation of this heritage and its wider application to the special problems with which he dealt.

The place of Biblical thought in the development of a Christian Mysticism, as witnessed in its use and limitations in von Hugel's interpretation, lends countenance to the hope that the present revival of Biblical Theology will help nourish a genuine Christian Mysticism. Historically, Christian mystics have recalled a corrupted or complacent Church from the perils of legalism and intellectualism. Periodically they have revived the necessary sense of awe and mystery, the belief in man's potentiality for fellowship with God, the understanding of the immanence of God in the work of the Holy Spirit, the witness to the actuality of regenerative union with Christ and the place of contemplation and adoration in the Christian life. But legalism and intellectualism are perversions rather than expressions of Biblical faith. The strongest antidote to these perversions is not some extra-Biblical corrective, but a more creative apprehension of

Biblical realism. At this point the Christ-Mysticism of the New Testament becomes the focal point for both the mystic and the Biblical theologian. The work of von Hugel, in both its values and limitations, indicates the inseparable relationship of these converging streams.

In the last analysis the value of von Hugel's interpretation of Christian Mysticism can never be restricted to the cogency of his psychological analyses and philosophical elaborations alone. While possessing a discriminating mind, von Hugel was no metaphysical genius and his contribution to this field cannot be guaged by this criterion alone. The power of his interpretation is inseparably linked with the personal integration of the "elements" which his life embodied to such an exceptional degree of fruitfulness. While he would be the first to condemn "the philosophy of the insoluble conflict of head and heart"[23] he was also sensitive to the distinction between one's experiential knowledge of Reality and subsequent systematic elucidation. An autobiographical word in THE REALITY OF GOD is significant in this connection.

> I have been able to live for seventy years, stimulated and enriched by those spontaneous, informal, delightful experiences, which indeed required and contained sense stimulation, but which were not preceded but followed by clear analysis, formal classification, and deliberate theory. Some such analyses, classifications, and theories were doubtless soon awakened within me by the teaching of my elders; yet such teaching, at its best, only articulated more fully the obscurer processes and results of my own previous life, and such results of this teaching then coalesced with my own previous experience, so that this whole now became the starting point for further apprehensions, which were now in part plainer than before, yet which were still, for the greater part, dim, sometimes vivid, but never entirely clear.

23. RG, p. 31

> Throughout such a long life it remains true that my convictions and certainties were affected, and continue to be affected, more by homely knowledge than by haughty science -- more by the self-revelation of other realities to my own reality than by the systematic elucidation of it all conveyed to me by expert reasoners.[24]

As an interpreter of Christian Mysticism this distinction cannot be overlooked. For had he never published THE MYSTICAL ELEMENT those who came within the range of his influence would have gained through personal contact a living exposition of Christian Mysticism. In him the affective life expressed itself in conjunction with institutional appreciation and robust thought. Von Hugel experienced a "love union" with God which even the most skeptical would never dub "sentimental." He was the embodiment of <u>adoration</u> which had passed through the Caudine Forks of determinist science, and receptivity which was accompanied by prodigious activity.

Likewise, von Hugel's legacy to the Philosophy of Religion was the example of his thorough-going prosecution of the mediatorial task of Christianity. He fearlessly resisted the temptations to rest in facile syntheses of profound problems or to declare war against the World in the name of the Word. With Christian concern and resolution he lived at the juncture of national cultures, tradition and the modern spirit, his communion and the rest of Christendom, the City of God and the City of Satan. It was from this vantage point that he wrestled with the intricate problems involved in Christian Mysticism. And only by an increasing approxima-

24. Ibid., p. 38

tion of this mediatorial concern will it be possible to continue the work on this problem and the many urgent ones which challenge the contemporary Christian who seeks to bear his witness seriously and sympathetically in a shaken world. While such a position is characterized more by agony than security, it alone makes possible our "facing the darkness with unshaken trust."[25]

25. Pap. Com. op. cit., p. 55

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